



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

DHA-IPM 18-003
February 23, 2018

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS)
DIRECTOR OF THE JOINT STAFF
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (HEALTH READINESS POLICY AND OVERSIGHT)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (HEALTH SERVICES POLICY AND OVERSIGHT)
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (HEALTH RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND POLICY)
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Interim Procedures Memorandum 18-003, Retiree-At-Cost Hearing Aid Program/Retiree Hearing Aid Purchase Program (RACHAP)

References: See Attachment 1.

Background. Since the 1990s, the RACHAP has been available to certain former members of the uniformed Services (“RACHAP eligible beneficiaries” defined in the Glossary on page 10). As a result of Section 713 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, RACHAP is now also available to *dependents* of former members of the uniformed Services.

RACHAP is a voluntary program that allows hearing aids to be purchased at cost at a medical treatment facility (MTF) (as defined in the Glossary on page 10). The fitting and required follow-up services are covered by resources at the MTF. MTFs participate in RACHAP to varying degrees. Each MTF determines the extent of its RACHAP implementation and scope of RACHAP services based on capability, capacity, and access to care standards.

Purpose. The intent of this Defense Health Agency-Interim Procedures Memorandum (DHA-IPM) is to establish common and uniform guidelines, standards, and procedures for all DoD MTFs providing hearing care services to beneficiaries under RACHAP authority. As a result of Section 713 of the NDAA FY 2017, this DHA-IPM expands RACHAP services to include eligible *dependents* of certain former members of the uniformed Services. Based on the authority provided in References (a) through (c), and in accordance with the guidance of References (d) through (m), this DHA-IPM:

- Implements provisions set forth in Reference (a).
- Allows MTFs to provide hearing aid fittings and required follow-up services through RACHAP to RACHAP-eligible beneficiaries (as defined in the Glossary on page 10) with MTF capability and capacity.
- This DHA-IPM is effective immediately and will be incorporated into a future DHA-Procedural Instruction. This DHA-IPM will expire effective 12 months from the date of issue.


Applicability. This DHA-IPM applies to OSD, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Office of the Inspector General of DoD, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this DHA-IPM as the “DoD Components”).

Policy Implementation. This DHA-IPM provides guidance for implementation of Reference (a), at the discretion of an MTF Commander or Director as to the MTF’s capacity and capability to support this program.

Responsibilities. See Attachment 2.

Procedures. See Attachment 3.

Releasability. **Cleared for public release.** This DHA-IPM is available on the Internet from the Defense Health Agency (DHA) SharePoint site at:
<http://www.health.mil/dhapublications>.


R.C. BONG
VADM, MC, USN
Director

Attachments:
As stated

cc:

Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs

Surgeon General of the Army

Surgeon General of the Navy

Surgeon General of the Air Force

Medical Officer of the Marine Corps

Joint Staff Surgeon

Director of Health, Safety, and Work-Life, U.S. Coast Guard

Surgeon General of the National Guard Bureau

Director, National Capital Region Medical Directorate

ATTACHMENT 1

REFERENCES

- (a) National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017, Section 713
- (b) DoD Directive 5136.01, "Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD(HA))," September 30, 2013, as amended
- (c) DoD Directive 5136.13, "Defense Health Agency (DHA)," September 30, 2013
- (d) DHA-Procedural Instruction 5025.01, "Publication System," August 21, 2015
- (e) Army Regulation 40-400, "Patient Administration", October 13, 2006, as amended
- (f) Army Regulation 40-3, "Medical, Dental, and Veterinary Care," April 23, 2013, as amended
- (g) Air Force Instruction 44-102, "Medical Care Management," March 17, 2015, as amended
- (h) TRICARE Policy Manual 6010.60-M, Section 8.1, "Special Otorhinolaryngologic Services," April 1, 2015, as amended
- (i) TRICARE Policy Manual 6010.60-M, Section 8.2, "Hearing Aids and Hearing Aid Services," April 1, 2015, as amended
- (j) Code of Federal Regulations, Title 32, Section 199.4(e)(24), (g)(47), and (g)(51)
- (k) Washington Headquarters Services Administrative Instruction No.102, "Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Federal Register (FR) System," November 6, 2006, as amended
- (l) United States Code, Title 10, Section 1072, (2)
- (m) United States Code, Title 10, Section 1077, (a)(16)

ATTACHMENT 2

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. DIRECTOR, DHA. The Director, DHA, will facilitate the implementation of this DHA-IPM.

2. SURGEONS GENERAL OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS. The Surgeons General of the Military Departments will:
 - a. Disseminate this message to all MTF Commanders/Directors.

 - b. Develop procedures, and encourage their respective MTFs to participate in RACHAP, if capacity and capability exist.

 - c. Implement the developed procedures as soon as practicable.

3. MTF COMMANDERS/DIRECTORS. The MTF Commanders/Directors will:
 - a. Understand RACHAP as outlined in this DHA-IPM and provisions set forth in Section 713 of the NDAA FY 2017.

 - b. Determine whether their MTF has the capability and capacity to support RACHAP for RACHAP eligible beneficiaries (as defined in the Glossary on page 10).

 - c. Establish processes that enable RACHAP to be offered to RACHAP-eligible beneficiaries to the greatest extent possible.

4. SERVICE AUDIOLOGY CONSULTANTS AND/OR PRODUCT LINE LEAD (NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION (NCR)). In order to be able to inform beneficiaries which MTFs support RACHAP, the Service Audiology Consultants and/or Product Line Lead (NCR) will provide DHA Communications Division with a quarterly email update detailing the status of participation of each MTF and any access limitations or restrictions to:
dha.ncr.comm.mbx.tricare-web-team@mail.mil.

5. DHA COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION. DHA Communications Division will:
 - a. Educate beneficiaries about the subject matter of this DHA-IPM.

 - b. Communicate with beneficiaries on the availability and limitations of RACHAP.

c. Develop and maintain publicly accessible website information listing participating MTFs and their status to include a direct link to the MTF website; this will be updated quarterly via MTF reporting.

ATTACHMENT 3

PROCEDURES

OVERVIEW. MTFs will determine whether they have the capacity and capability to fully support RACHAP.

a. Capacity and capability will be determined using the following:

- (1) Readiness mission requirements;
- (2) Necessary equipment;
- (3) Space requirements;
- (4) Projected demand;
- (5) Maximizing provider productivity standards/targets;
- (6) Clinical expertise (i.e., pediatric hearing aid fitting experience); and
- (7) Otolaryngology clinical support (i.e., pediatrics).

b. MTFs that determine that capacity and capability exist may participate in RACHAP under the following provisions:

(1) Participation in RACHAP will only include “RACHAP-eligible beneficiaries” (as defined in the Glossary on page 10).

(2) MTFs may determine their level of participation (i.e., limiting to former members only; available to beneficiaries only within a certain mile radius).

(3) RACHAP is only available through direct care; MTFs are not authorized to reimburse the purchase of hearing aids through the private sector, a prescription or audiogram from a network provider outside of RACHAP.

(4) A hearing aid is an individual medical device that must be fit and programmed by an audiologist trained in that particular device. Manufacturers and products available through RACHAP (at cost to the government) may be different than those utilized by a network provider. Hearing aids will not be mailed to a network provider or directly to a beneficiary.

(5) The typical course of care for a RACHAP-eligible beneficiary requiring a hearing aid should include: an initial appointment for evaluation and hearing aid order, a second appointment for fitting of the hearing aid, and follow-up appointments as needed.

(6) Hearing aids purchased under RACHAP will be paid for by the beneficiary. The beneficiary is responsible for sending payment to the manufacturer at the time the device is ordered.

GLOSSARY

PART I. ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DHA	Defense Health Agency
DHA-IPM	Defense Health Agency-Interim Procedures Memorandum
FY	Fiscal Year
MTF	medical treatment facility
NCR	National Capital Region
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
RACHAP	Retiree-At-Cost Hearing Aid Program/Retiree Hearing Aid Purchase Program
TRR	TRICARE Retired Reserve

PART II. DEFINITIONS

MTF. For purposes of this DHA-IPM and implementation of the expanded RACHAP throughout the Military Health System, the term “medical treatment facility” includes those facilities of the uniformed Services that are the functional equivalent of an MTF for purposes of RACHAP-eligible beneficiary services (e.g., facilities within the NCR and the Lovell Federal Health Care Center in Great Lakes).

RACHAP. A voluntary MTF hearing aid program that allows RACHAP-eligible beneficiaries to purchase hearing aids at cost at an MTF and receive fittings and related medically necessary and appropriate services. The MTF determines the extent RACHAP implementation and scope of RACHAP services based on MTF capability, capacity, and access to care standards. RACHAP eligible beneficiaries may purchase hearing aids, utilizing the government contract price through manufacturers (i.e., at cost), for fitting and related medically necessary and appropriate services within the direct care system. **Note:** The program is not a TRICARE private sector care benefit.

RACHAP-eligible beneficiary. For purposes of this DHA-IPM and implementation of the expanded RACHAP throughout the Military Health System, this term includes dependents of regular retired members, dependents of non-regular (reserve) retired members age 60 and over, dependents of Medal of Honor Recipients (who are all entitled by statute to MTF Space-Available care) and those dependents of non-regular retired members who are under age 60 and covered under TRICARE Retired Reserve (TRR) based on their sponsor’s purchase of TRR member plus family coverage (and thereby eligible for MTF Space-Available care). Active Duty, regular retired members, TRICARE Reserve Select participating members, and TRR participating members are separately eligible for MTF direct care and legacy RACHAP. The

term excludes: Active Duty dependents who are eligible for hearing aids within the scope and limitations of Reference (m), [i.e., only for “profound hearing loss”] separate from RACHAP; dependents enrolled in the United States Family Health Plan; dependents of Selected Reservists who are MTF-eligible based on coverage under TRICARE Reserve Select member plus, family coverage; and/or dependents of Retired Reservists (under age 60), who are MTF-eligible based on coverage under TRR member plus family coverage.