



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL COMMAND
2050 WORTH ROAD
FORT SAM HOUSTON TX 78234-6000

MCHO-CL-M

OTSG/MEDCOM Policy Memo 08-034

Expires 11 August 2010

11 AUG 2008

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanders, MEDCOM Regional Medical Commands

SUBJECT: Improving Military Treatment Facility (MTF) Telephone Appointing Services

1. Reference: Memorandum, OTSG, MCHO-CL-M, 13 Sep 06, subject: Army Medical Department (AMEDD) Access to Care Campaign Plan.
2. Purpose: To improve MTF telephone appointing services critical to beneficiary access. This policy focuses on actions that reduce variability in our telephone appointing processes MEDCOM-wide, thus providing our beneficiaries predictability wherever attempting to access care through telephone appointing.
3. Proponent: The proponent for this policy is the TRICARE Division, Assistant Chief of Staff for Health Policy and Services.
4. Policy: This policy establishes new MEDCOM-wide objectives for telephone appointing:
 - a. 90% of all calls answered within 90 seconds.
 - b. Less than 3% caller abandonment rate.
5. Responsibilities: MTFs must reach telephone appointing performance objectives no later than 1 Mar 09.
 - a. Army Medical Centers and MTFs with and without Graduate Medical Education (GME) must organizationally and functionally centralize telephone appointing functions for all primary care appointing.
 - b. Army Medical Centers and MTFs with and without GME must organizationally and functionally centralize all primary and specialty care appointment template and schedule management duties and responsibilities.
 - c. MTFs will book all appointments by access to care category/type and fully utilize all Appointment Standardization III features to maximize appointment availability and utilization.
 - d. MTFs that choose to contract the centralized telephone appointing function will coordinate all contracting actions through their RMC and OTSG/MEDCOM TRICARE Division.

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e. MTFs will post the call center's local and toll free telephone numbers along with the hours of call center operation on the MTF's external Internet home web page.

f. MTF call centers must be accessible "24/7" by both a local and toll free number.

g. MTFs will maintain and centrally manage a "24/7" appointment cancellation line accessible through central appointment's local and toll free numbers.

h. During normal business hours, MTFs will utilize a call tree for beneficiary access to central appointing. The number of call tree options is not limited. However, at a minimum, MTFs must implement the following call tree options:

(1) Option #1: "to make an appointment" (cannot be routed to voice mail or other call tree option).

(2) Option #2: "to cancel an appointment" (can be routed to voice mail and/or to appointment agent).

i. After normal business hours, MTFs will utilize a call tree for beneficiary access to central appointing. The number of call tree options is not limited. However, at a minimum, MTFs must implement the following call tree options:

(1) Option #1: "hours of call center service/operation."

(2) Option #2: "cancel an appointment."

j. During normal business hours, route all calls to agents trained for first call resolution (agent must address caller's appointment need without transferring to another individual/clinic/front desk).

k. Report monthly through individual RMCs to OTSG/MEDCOM TRICARE Division telephone appointing performance metrics (enclosure).

6. MTF Commanders are encouraged to schedule and execute a Lean Six Sigma project to further improve the overall centralized telephone appointing process.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Encl


WILLIAM H. THRESHER
Chief of Staff

Telephone Appointing Performance Metrics

MTFs must report telephone performance data for telephone hold rates and the caller abandoned rate utilizing the following format.

MTF Monthly Automatic Call Distributor (ACD) Data Reporting Format (In Seconds)							
Facility:							
Report Period: (2nd week of each month)							
Report POC:							
Date	Day	Time Period	Avg-Wait Time Secs	ACD Calls Answered	DN Calls (Non ACD Calls Answered)	Calls Abandoned (ABN)	Total Calls ACD+DN+ABN

MTFs are required to report caller data in smallest averages, i.e., 5 minute – 15 minute