



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

**JAN 29 1996**

**MEMORANDUM FOR TRICARE LEAD AGENTS THROUGH:**

SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY  
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY  
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE

**SUBJECT:** Inclusion of Dentistry in TRICARE Regions

I have recently met with the Tri-Service Dental Chiefs and expressed my desire that dentistry be included as an integral component of the regional TRICARE system. Our Military Health Services System (MHSS) must not exclude important and critical components of an integrated health care delivery system for our beneficiaries.

In that vein, I request that the Lead Agents immediately initiate movement toward substantial and meaningful inclusion of the dental resources in your respective regions in order that we can truly have an integrated health care delivery system worldwide. Please formally report your progress to me by the summer TRICARE conference in July 1996.

The Service Dental Chiefs have developed a dental readiness metric that will allow the Services and the Department to assess the readiness of our active duty forces accurately. On a quarterly basis, the Dental Chiefs will report to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) through their Surgeons General the Dental Readiness of all our active duty forces. Our goal is to achieve 95 percent of all active duty forces in dental classification 1 or 2. To meet this formidable goal, we need to incorporate the dental health care delivery system into the regional TRICARE system as soon as possible.

I look forward to your reports of progress in truly integrating our MHSS!

Stephen C. Joseph, M.D., M.P.H.

**HA POLICY 96-024**

cc:  
Service Dental Chiefs