



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
PACIFIC AIR FORCES

MAR 22 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR 18TH MEDICAL GROUP CLINICS AND BENEFICIARIES

FROM: 18th Medical Group Commander

SUBJECT: Space-Available Policy for Medical Care at the 18th Medical Group, Kadena Air Base, Japan

1. The 18th Medical Group (18 MDG) is dedicated to providing high-quality, patient-centered outpatient care. The following policy is derived from the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Policy 11-005 "TRICARE Policy for Access to Care," the Defense Health Agency (DHA)'s "Standard Guidance for Space-Available Care in Medical Treatment Facilities" dated 03 March 2023, and DHA's memorandum "Access to Care Guidance on Active Duty "Must Sees" Population," dated 26 September 2022..

2. The mission of our Military Treatment Facility (MTF) is to provide healthcare to TRICARE beneficiaries, enhance medical readiness of the force, and contribute to installation support activities. Because the civilian component of our total force (civilian employees and contractor personnel) is critical to our mission success, this Space-Available policy is implemented to best support both them and their authorized accompanying family members.

3. The following patient categories are "must sees" by the MTFs regardless of local Space-A policies:

- a. Active Duty Service Members (ADSMs) assigned in the MTF's area of responsibility; ADSMs in training status; Activated Guard and Reserve forces; ADSMs enrolled in TRICARE Prime Remote or who are traveling on personal/TDY status; and ADSMs on terminal leave regardless of location or empanelment status.
- b. Foreign Service Members as authorized in DHA 6025.11.
- c. Newborns, less than 60 days old.

NOTE: ADSMs not stationed in Okinawa, and Foreign Service members will be booked appointments within the Warrior Operational Medicine Clinic and will be booked the first available appointments.

4. Space-Available or Space-A care is primarily offered for patients with acute conditions such as minor illnesses, musculoskeletal injuries, and acute gastrointestinal complaints. Nonetheless, Space-A Patients can seek treatment for non-acute health problems. To ensure patient safety, Medical Staff may deem a medical condition(s) outside their scope of practice and refer the patient to their primary care manager (PCM). Routine care outside the scope of Space-A access will be deferred to the patient's PCM for continuity of care and the patient's safety.

5. Non-empaneled patients are HIGHLY encouraged to seek care within their healthcare insurance provider's network as access to the MTF cannot be guaranteed. In no particular priority order, the following categories will be seen on a Space-A basis; however, all of the following categories are eligible to use MTF Emergency Rooms (ERs) or Urgent Care (UC) clinics:

- a. TRICARE for Life (TFL). TFL beneficiaries aged 65 and over not enrolled in TRICARE Plus.
- b. TRICARE Select. Beneficiaries who have elected to use TRICARE Select.
- c. Non-Enrolled Beneficiaries. Beneficiaries who are not eligible for or have elected not to be enrolled in either Tricare Prime or Select. *Patients who are not command sponsored and beneficiaries not enrolled to the TRICARE Pacific region are considered non-enrolled.*

d. **Eligible Family Members Enrolled in TRICARE Prime Remote.** The TRICARE Regional Contractors will arrange for other acute and routine primary care to be provided in the TRICARE network. If specialty care is required, beneficiaries in this category may be referred for specialty care by MTF ERs or UC clinics or, be recommended by a network primary care provider.

6. Appointment availability will be determined by calling the Centralized Appointment line after 1000 the day of the appointment within the Family Medicine, Pediatrics, and Women's Health clinics only.

7. Space-A services at the 18th Medical Group, Kadena Air Base:

a. Will be in seen in-person and will be determined on a first come first serve basis. It is the provider's discretion to determine if the medical team and MTF is equipped to treat the medical needs of the patient. As a result, the medical staff may reach patients prior to the scheduled time for details about the appointment request.

b. If the MTF Provider deems it necessary during the Space-A visit, the provider can refer the Space-A patient for specialty care within the 18th Medical Group's scope of services offered, the patient may be scheduled for initial specialty appointment and any recommended follow-up care by the provider.

c. If deemed medically necessary during the Space-A appointment, providers can authorize a scheduled follow up in-person, Telephone Consultations (T-Con), or Virtual Care appointment for Space-A patients to provide the highest quality of care.

i. Primary care staff will notify Group Practice Manager of follow-up care established for Space-A patients.

ii. Primary care staff will annotate the need for a single follow up appointment within the medical chart. Call center agents and medical staff will review the prior encounter note for follow up prior to scheduling follow-up T-Con or Virtual Appointments.

d. Space-A patients are not eligible for routine medical care of complex medical conditions which require repeat follow-ups and monitoring. This care should be managed by their Primary Care Manager (PCM). Space-A patients may be seen for chronic issues which require limited monitoring. The decision of stability and appropriateness of medication will be left to the treating provider.

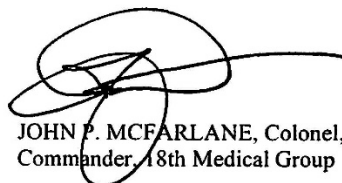
e. Space-A patients may request exemptions to this policy through the 18th Medical Group's Chief of Medical Staff (SGH).

f. Prior to being seen, patients will report to the cashiers' cage located on the main Floor of the Kadena Clinic for mini-registration. Clinics will ensure the patient has a current (within 12-months), DD Form 2569, *Third Party Collection Program - Record of Other Health Insurance form*, on file.

NOTE: Dental Clinic services and treatments will be prioritized in accordance with Air Force Manual (AFMAN) 47-101, *Managing Dental Services*, Chapter 4.

8. For emergency issues (life, limb, or eyesight), patients should seek care at the local ER and report to U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa located on Camp Foster or call 911 (098-934-5911).

9. This memorandum supersedes the 18 MDG's Space-Available Policy signed 02 August 2022. Please contact Capt Allan S. Rodriguez at DSN 315-630-4303 or via email at allan.s.rodriguez2.mil@health.mil for questions or concerns.



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