Mental Health Care Services
Quick Reference Guide

TriWest is proud to partner with the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide Veterans with care services through the Veterans Affairs Patient-Centered Community Care (VAPC3) program, the Veterans Choice Card Benefit, TriWest is not involved with the TRICARE program.

TriWest’s Role

TriWest’s primary role is to appoint the veterans with the appropriate community providers, for both inpatient and outpatient services, in a timely manner. Our staff members obtain a veteran’s appointing preferences and then make calls to the appropriate providers in the veteran’s area. We have 5 days to make that appointment. The VA generally determines what services the veteran is eligible to receive in the community. This determination depends on what services are available within the VA with which the veteran is enrolled.

Provider Requirements for Mental Health:

- **Evidence Based Psychotherapy**
  - The Veteran’s Administration has placed great emphasis on Evidence-Based Psychotherapy (EBP) and often will request a specific intervention. Providers of EBP must have received specialized training and experience in the EBP. Some of the most common requests are for: Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PE) for PTSD, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Depression, Chronic Pain and Insomnia. Although the Minneapolis VA is not in the TriWest region, their website does provide an excellent description of VA EBP [http://www.minneapolis.va.gov/services/MentalHealth/MHebt.asp](http://www.minneapolis.va.gov/services/MentalHealth/MHebt.asp)

- **VA/DoD Clinical Practice Guidelines**
  - For both inpatient and outpatient mental health care, providers should follow the Veterans Affairs/Department of Defense (VA/DoD) Clinical Practice Guidelines (CPGs) for the diagnosed mental health problem found at [http://www.healthquality.va.gov/](http://www.healthquality.va.gov/) Per the instructions in the CPG, “The use of guidelines must always be in the context of a health care provider’s clinical judgment in the care of a particular patient. For that reason, the
guidelines may be viewed as an educational tool to provide information and assist decision making.

- Patients with a history of Military Sexual Trauma (MST) being treated for a mental health problem related to MST will receive care from a provider of the gender of their choice.

**Suicide Risk/The Veterans Crisis Line**
- If suicide risk is a clinical issue, the patient should be provided a written copy of the patient’s personal Suicide Prevention Safety Plan (please reference http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/docs/VA_Safety_planning_manual.pdf). The plan will include the Veterans Crisis Line telephone number. The Veterans Crisis Line is available 24/7/365 in the event of a crisis, and they can assist in connecting the veteran to services: 1-800-273-8255, press 1 for veterans. http://www.veteranscrisisline.net/

**Medical documentation**
- The VA uses an integrated healthcare model. They require medical documentation which allows VA Providers to integrate the services provided within the community into their care. Psychotherapy notes (defined as “notes recorded in any medium by a mental health professional documenting or analyzing the contents of conversation during a private counseling session”) shall be kept separate from the Veteran’s medical record, per Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations. However, medication prescription and monitoring (as appropriate), counseling session start and stop times, modalities and frequencies of treatment, results of clinical tests and any summary of diagnosis, functional status, treatment plans, symptoms, prognosis or progress shall be provided in the medical record and do not require Veteran authorization for disclosure.

**TriWest has developed forms to streamline this process for the providers. The forms are:**
- Initial evaluation – required within 14 days of assessment
- Claims Service Summary – required before claims will be paid for those dates of service
- Episode Completion – required within 14 days of episode completion
- Secondary Authorization Request (SAR) – required if additional care is requested
- Psychological Testing Request - required for all psychological/neuropsychological testing requests
Claims

All Claims will be submitted through WPS, TriWest’s claims processing partner. The HCFA 1500 is used for all claims. For a comprehensive VAPC3 and Veterans Choice Program comparison, please go to this link: https://www.triwest.com/en/vapc3-provider/Quick-Reference-Guides/VACAA-VAPC3-Differences_Network-Provider.pdf

Important numbers

- VAPC3 BH Phone Number: 1-855-722-2838 ext. 72104
- CHOICE BH Phone Number: 1-866-606-8198, push 6 after the greeting – there will be no prompt.
- BH Fax number: 1-866-284-3736
- Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255