Authorization Management for the Veterans Choice Program (VCP) and Patient-Centered Community Care (PC3)
Background

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) needed to expand health care access for Veterans in communities across the nation

VA awarded TriWest the Patient-Centered Community Care (PC3) contract in 2013

In 2014, Congress introduced and President Obama signed into law the Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act

Section 101 established the Veterans Choice Program (VCP) and went live on Nov. 5, 2014
The Veterans Choice Program (VCP) is the newest addition to VA’s Patient-Centered Community Care (PC3) program.

VCP provides eligible Veterans with community access to primary care, inpatient and outpatient specialty services, and behavioral health care.

VCP is Veteran-driven.

All Veterans enrolled for care with VA as of Aug. 1, 2014 received a Choice Card.
Veterans Choice Program (cont.)

Veterans’ eligibility to use their Choice Card in the private sector is determined by VA under the outlined criteria:

- The closest VA Medical Center (VAMC) or Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) is greater than 40 miles from their home; or
- They are, or will be, on a wait list of 30 days or more with a VAMC

When a Veteran needs to make an appointment, refer them to the number on the back of their Choice Card. If you would like to schedule an appointment on their behalf, call TriWest to make the appointment: 1-866-606-8198.
Appointment Scheduling & Authorization

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Veteran calls TriWest to confirm VCP eligibility

OR

VA sends referral to TriWest (PC3)

PSR locates VCP/PC3 provider

PSR makes appointment on behalf of Veteran

TriWest sends authorization to provider via fax
Appointment Scheduling & Authorization

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Providers will receive a detailed authorization for care from TriWest

To avoid claims denials, all care requires an authorization from TriWest before services are rendered

For Veterans who are eligible because of a 30-day wait list, providers will also receive clinical/consult information from a VAMC

For Veterans who are eligible because of distance constraints (>40 miles), only the TriWest authorization is provided
Labs, X-rays, Ancillary Providers

Routine labs and X-rays are included in TriWest authorizations

For surgeries, anesthesiology services are also included in authorizations

*Include the authorization number with your order form for the labs, X-rays, or anesthesiologist*

Instruct the ancillary provider to include the authorization number on its claim when billing TriWest
If you’re an ancillary provider and receive an order to treat a Veteran using his/her VA community benefits:

- The order should include the authorization number
- If you’re not sure, call the prescribing provider’s office to confirm, and obtain an authorization number
- Bill TriWest for your services and include the authorization number on your claim
TriWest coordinates inpatient health care with network facilities when VA has authorized the care.

For discharges, the facility should coordinate with TriWest to arrange necessary supplies, home health, and equipment.

- Complete the Secondary Authorization Request Form available on [www.triwest.com/provider](http://www.triwest.com/provider)
- Submit the completed form by fax: 1-866-259-0311
Continued Stay and Transfer Process

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- TriWest will coordinate with VA to:
  - Facilitate the transfer of the Veteran back to a VA facility or elsewhere, and
  - Complete discharge planning to their home, if other services are required
Transition of Care Process

All transitions of care need to be approved by and coordinated with VA

Receiving provider must have a new, unique authorization before initiating treatment

When multiple visits/procedures/treatments are involved in an episode of care, the number of treatments and/or the time period will be determined by VA
Emergency Health Care Process

Emergency care should be provided to any eligible Veteran who self-presents to an emergency room (ER)

The ER must contact the Veteran’s VAMC **within 72 hours**

VAMC health care staff will determine the Veteran’s eligibility and authorize care if Veteran is eligible
Providers should notify the closest VAMC **within 72 hours** of an emergency admission (this also applies to weekend notifications)

**Forms available at** [www.triwest.com/provider](http://www.triwest.com/provider)
Mental Health Care Services

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- PC3 and VCP cover services delivered by qualified, authorized mental health care providers to diagnose and/or treat mental health components of a medical or psychological condition.

- Veterans with a history of Military Sexual Trauma receiving treatment related to this condition will receive care from a provider of the gender of their choice.
Mental Health Care Services (cont.)

For 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/)

**These are baseline criteria to follow, and should not replace clinical judgment**
Additional Services – Continued Care
Secondary Authorization Requests (SAR) should be submitted to TriWest when a provider determines:

- A Veteran needs additional care from another provider or office (such as a specialist) with a different TIN
- A Veteran needs a second opinion
- A Veteran needs continued care outside the authorized date range
- A Veteran needs additional services not included on the authorization letter

TriWest authorization letters are now more inclusive of CPT codes, eliminating the need for frequent SARs
Secondary Authorization Process (cont.)

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Access the SAR decision tool at www.triwest.com/provider-SAR to determine whether a SAR is necessary.

The request for care should include:
- SAR 15 Form
- Notes
- Discharge plans
- Justification for the request for additional services

Submit the completed SAR to TriWest by fax to: 1-866-259-0311.
Secondary Authorization Process (cont.)

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- TriWest submits SARs to the appropriate VAMC, if needed
- The initial turnaround time is 14 business days
- Check the status of the SAR request on the TriWest Secure Provider Portal at [www.triwest.com/provider](http://www.triwest.com/provider)
TriWest Provider Portal

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**TriWest.com/provider**: your one-stop shop for information on filing claims and navigating VCP and PC3

- Provider handbook
- Quick reference guides
- eSeminars (training you can take at your own pace)
- Webinars (instructor-led online training)
- Additional resources and links to important information
Register for a secure account to:
- Upload medical documentation
- Check authorization status (including SARs)
- Print authorization information
- Check claims status

Visit [www.triwest.com/provider](http://www.triwest.com/provider) and click “Register for Secure Access”
Thank You!