

Army Family Action Plan

2012 Focus Forum Top Issues



Appointments with Assigned Primary Care Manager (PCM) Scope:

Patients are not able to get appointments to see their PCM in a timely manner according to Tricare standards of care. Patients have to see other providers besides their assigned PCM; this results in lack of continuity of care and inconsistency of treatment plans. Providers other than the patient's PCM must take extra time to familiarize themselves with patient's records. Lack of available appointments with assigned PCM prevents continuity of treatment causing additional physical and mental health issues.

Recommendation: Provide more appointments for patients with their assigned PCM in a timely manner

Status: Unattainable. All civil service and contracting recruiting actions for additional PCMs and support staff have been affected by the hiring freeze for an indefinite period. Multiple education efforts are ongoing in various mediums to the community on appointment availability and where to seek assistance when needed.

Complimentary Alternative Medicine (CAM) Options and Benefits Scope:

Currently, there are limited CAM options for Active Duty due to lack of provider availability and location limitations; and, it is not a Tricare benefit for dependants. CAM includes, but is not limited to, acupuncture, massage therapy, and Reiki by relieving pain and stress and treating medical conditions with a holistic approach. CAM provides a nonchemical treatment for pain management, stress, and other medical conditions. CAM reduces Primary Care Manager (PCM) visits, medicine refills, and prescription overuse.

Recommendations:

1. Extend CAM benefits to dependants.
2. Extend CAM options for Active Duty.

Status: Unattainable locally; Pain management services will be growing this year (FY13). These services will remain primarily for active duty, but some very limited services will be provided for dependents with a referral on a space available basis. **Issue to be forwarded to FORSCOM.**

Internal Promotions for Civilian Employees Scope:

Management hires outside the organization instead of promoting civilian employees from within. It is more cost effective to promote from within the organization instead of training new employees. The loss of experienced, trained employees from within the organization leads to reduced workplace continuity and organizational capabilities.

Recommendation: Promote eligible civilian employees from within organization before posting job announcement.

Status: Unattainable. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Federal law, 5 United States Code 2301(b), requires management to follow specific merit principles when recruiting, selecting, or promoting employees. In addition to guidelines, most directorates have internal standard operating procedures (SOP) on hiring civil service employees; however, there is not a regulatory SOP for all directorates. Classes are offered through Army Community Service, Employment Readiness Program that assists employees with resume writing, as well as continuing education opportunities for employees interested in advancement.

Civilian Employee Leave Donations

Scope: The civilian employee leave donation program is limited because civilian employees can only donate annual leave. Civilian employees cannot donate sick leave. Civilian employees who experience a medical hardship also experience financial hardship when they do not have leave. Civilian employees lacking leave can benefit from sick leave donations from civilian employees, who seldom use it, because it allows them to maintain their income during prolonged absences from work.

Recommendation: The Voluntary Leave Transfer Program allows an employee who has a medical emergency to receive transferred annual leave directly from other employees in order to avoid being placed in a leave without pay situation. This allows an employee to continue to receive pay while recuperating from an emergency (whether their own or a Family member's). Allow civilian employees to donate both annual and /or sick unused leave for other civilian employees in need of leave.

Status: To be forwarded to FORSCOM

On Post Transportation for Soldiers and Family Members Scope:

As per Army Regulation 58-1, "Management, Acquisition and Use for Motor Vehicles," paragraph 2-4, August 2004 and III Corps & Fort Hood Regulation 56-6; Soldiers and Family members have limited options to free transportation on post. The Soldier Shuttle does not drop off or pick up Soldiers and Family members at military housing and is only available to designated locations during evenings, weekends, and training holidays. The limited options of on-post transportation causes financial hardship, increased stress, and loss of work time for Soldiers and Family members

Recommendation: Increase options for free on-post transportation for Soldiers and Family members.

Status: Unattainable. The on-post shuttle that is free to Soldiers is funded by appropriated funds. It was established to meet the Corps Commander's intent to provide on-post transportation primarily to single Soldiers without privately owned vehicles; dependents can ride on a space available basis. The HOP used to run on post, but it was underutilized. AR 58-1, paragraph 5-2, states that shuttle service will not be established solely to accommodate dependents of active duty personnel nor serve as justification to increase an existing service. Current funding levels have made the current post shuttle a mission reimbursed activity, and we do not expect this funding level to improve over the next few years.

Child Visitation for Soldiers Living in Barracks Scope:

Barracks are not a quality, stable Family environment for children of Soldiers who are non-custodial parents. Non-custodial parents who live in the barracks and have custody of their child(ren) less than 180 consecutive days are not authorized Basic Allowance for Housing. Children cannot stay in the barracks overnight, so the Soldier must make alternative living arrangements during their child(ren)'s stay. Soldiers who are non-custodial parents suffer increased stress, financial hardships, and sacrifice meaningful time with their child(ren).

Recommendations:

1. Increase living arrangement options for Soldiers living in the barracks who are non-custodial parents.
2. Provide financial compensation for Soldiers living in the barracks who are non-custodial parents during periods of visitation with their child(ren).

Status: To be forwarded to FORSCOM

Traffic Congestion at Main Post Gates Scope:

Traffic is congested at main post gates, including Main Gate, Clear Creek and East Gate, during peak travel times (reporting to work, lunch and leaving work). 67,000 Soldiers and civilians work on Fort Hood. Reducing traffic congestion at main post gates will increase driver safety and saves money for Soldiers and civilians.

Recommendations:

1. Reduce traffic congestion at main post gates during peak travel times by staggering Soldier and civilian work schedules.
2. Ensure all available lanes at all entry gates are open and operational.

Status: Closed. Manning the Installation Access Control Points (IACP) is based on two factors: traffic flow and manpower availability. The goal is to ensure a reasonable traffic flow during all times while maintaining a vigilant force protection posture. Patrons are encouraged to use phantom express; Patrons also have the option to use other access gates to help reduce traffic congestion.

Quality Control of Household Good Movement

Scope: Quality control is not meeting the needs of Soldiers and Families relocating to and from Fort Hood; for example, due to Permanent Change of Station, End of Term Service, or retirement. Fort Hood Transportation Quality Control is understaffed. A move is a stressful time, and lack of quality control increases stress and financial hardship due to damaged household goods.

Recommendations:

1. Increase quality control for Soldiers and Families during the moving process; authorize QC personnel to handle problems on the spot.
2. Hire additional staff; current operations are understaffed.

Status: Closed. Quality Control (QA) Inspectors resolve problems on the spot. Fort Hood QA assistance is provided during normal working hours. Through self-counseling (move.mil) or when briefed by a counselor, customers are briefed to contact the local transportation office if issues arise and require government representation for mitigation. Per the Defense Transportation Regulation (DTR) Part IV Personal Property, Appendix P, QA Inspector, paragraph H, Inspection Goals, inspection goal will be 50% of HHG, unaccompanied baggage, mobile homes, non-temporary storage, and local drayage shipments by type. FY12 average inspections were at 63% with term and borrowed military manpower employees. We will continue to strive to meet the inspection goal with on hand inspectors.