


MILITARY FAMILIES
LEARNING NETWORK

**TRICARE ECHO: Special Care for
People with Special Needs**

*Thanks for joining us! We will get started soon.
While you're waiting you can get handouts etc. by following the below:*

<https://militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org/event/22025/>

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE 

This material is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Office of Military Family Readiness Policy, U.S. Department of Defense under Award Number 2015-48770-24.



MILITARY FAMILIES
LEARNING NETWORK

Connecting military family service providers
and Cooperative Extension professionals to research
and to each other through engaging online learning opportunities

<https://militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org>

Sign up for webinar email notifications at <https://militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org/mfln-events/>

CAPT Edward Simmer
Chief Clinical Officer, TRICARE Health Plan 

**The TRICARE Extended Care Health
Option (ECHO): Special Care for
Beneficiaries with Special Needs**

17 October 2018



"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

Today's Presenter

Edward D. Simmer, M.D., M.P.H.



- Captain, Medical Corps, United States Navy
- Chief Clinical Officer, TRICARE Health Plan, Defense Health Agency

4

Objectives



1. What is ECHO?
2. Who is Eligible?
3. How to Enroll
4. Services that are available as part of ECHO and ECHO Home Health Care
5. The Autism Care Demonstration (ACD) and ECHO
6. Costs Under the ECHO Program
7. Questions


"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

5



6


What is ECHO?



- The TRICARE Extended Care Health Option (ECHO) is a program designed to supplement the TRICARE Basic Program
- Provides supplemental services to active duty family members (ADFM) with qualifying mental and physical conditions (includes activated Reservists (>30d) and those on TAMP)
- Must be enrolled in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select
- Addresses challenges with qualifying for community services due to frequent PCS moves
- Ensures ADFMs with qualifying special needs receive the support and services they need to reach their maximum potential

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force" 7


What is ECHO?



- Created by Congressional legislation
- Details are contained in Chapter 9 of the TRICARE Policy Manual
- Does not replicate every Medicare Waiver service (which are different in every state and territory) but is informed by those services
- Moves with Active Duty Families as they **relocate from one duty station to the next, to include some overseas locations**

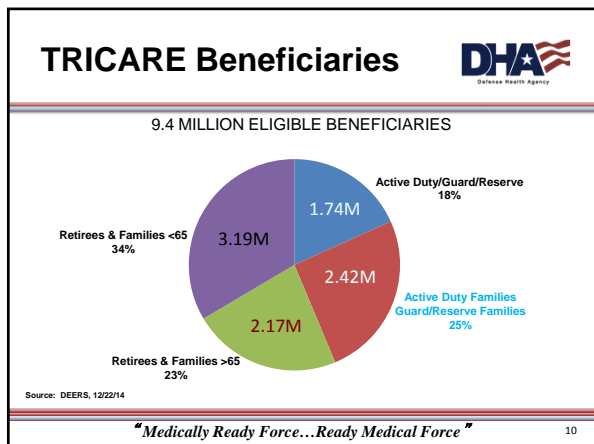
"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force" 8

Who is Eligible for ECHO?




- Active Duty Family Members who are TRICARE eligible
 - includes Guard and Reserve activated over 30 days
- Family members who remain eligible for TRICARE due to:
 - Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP)
 - Being a victim of physical or emotional abuse committed by a former Service member
 - Transitional Survivor status
- The beneficiary must be enrolled in TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Select, or US Family Health Plan (USFHP)

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force" 9



Who is Eligible for ECHO?




■ Qualifying Conditions:

- Moderate to severe intellectual disability (note the Manuals still use the outdated term "mental retardation" – we are working to update this)
- Serious physical disability
- Condition that causes the beneficiary to be homebound

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

11

Who is Eligible for ECHO?



■ Qualifying Conditions (continued):

- Neuromuscular Developmental condition in a child under the age of 3 that is expected to lead to intellectual disability or serious physical disability
- Having two or more disabilities that affect separate body systems
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

12

Who is Eligible for ECHO?



■ Age limits:

- There are no age limits for ECHO eligibility – an adult TRICARE beneficiary (for example a spouse) can receive ECHO benefits if they otherwise qualify
- Children may remain eligible beyond the usual TRICARE age limit (age 21, unless enrolled full time at an approved institution of higher learning, then age 23) for as long as their sponsor is on active duty if the sponsor's Service determines the child is incapable of self-support and the sponsor provides over 50% of child's financial support.

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

13

Who is Eligible for ECHO?



■ Key point:

- Except as noted above, ECHO eligibility ends when the sponsor retires or otherwise leaves active duty.



"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

14

How to Register for ECHO




- In order to be eligible for ECHO, the active duty sponsor must enroll in the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)
- EFMP is a Service mandated, non-medical program designed to provide information and non-clinical support to ADFMs with special needs, ensuring they are located in areas where they can receive the care and support needed
- It does not harm a Service member's career to be enrolled in EFMP
- To identify EFMP enrollment locations, go to www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil and search on EFMP

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

15


How to Register for ECHO



- To register for ECHO, the Member (or spouse) should contact their regional contractor (POCs at end of presentation), USFHP site, or the Overseas Contractor.
- The following must be submitted:
 - Proof of active duty status
 - Medical documentation of the qualifying condition for the beneficiary to be registered in ECHO
 - Proof of enrollment in EFMP (note – to avoid delays in ECHO registration, a 90-day provisional eligibility period is allowed while EFMP enrollment is completed)

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force" 16


Services Covered by ECHO



- Government cost share is limited to \$36,000/year for certain benefits available through ECHO, per beneficiary
- Assistive services including interpretation/translation
- Durable equipment, including temporary vehicle adaptations
- Habilitative and Rehabilitative Services
- Respite care (up to 16 hours/month in a month when another ECHO service is used)
- Institutional (residential) care
- Transportation to/from institutions/facilities in some cases


"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force" 17

Services Covered by ECHO




- Incontinence supplies (limited to those 3 years of age and older and whose incontinence is due to a physical or neurological disability)
- Hippotherapy (only for beneficiaries with Multiple Sclerosis or Cerebral Palsy)
- Special Education (but other public facilities must be utilized first)
- Maintenance of items purchased under the ECHO benefit

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force" 18

Services Excluded from Coverage Under ECHO 


- Anything that is covered by the TRICARE basic benefit
- Permanent structural modifications to vehicles or buildings
- Service animals
- Custodial and Domiciliary Care
- Services and treatments/medication that are unproven
- Services provided by an immediate family member or someone who lives in the beneficiary's home
- Services that a public school is required to provide by the child's Individualized Educational Program (IEP)

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force" 19

ECHO Home Health Care (EHC) 

- ECHO Home Health Care is available to beneficiaries in ECHO who reside in the 50 United States, District of Columbus, Puerto Rico and Guam when provided by a TRICARE authorized HHA
- Are Homebound
- Require medically necessary skilled services beyond the level of coverage provided by the TRICARE HHA PPS; or
- Require frequent interventions that are normally provided by the beneficiary's primary caregiver(s); and
- Are case-managed and the required services are specified in a physician-certified Plan Of Care (POC)
- Reimbursement for EHC is based on the "RUG-IV Case Mix Adjusted Federal Rates" published in the Federal Registry


"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force" 20

ECHO Home Health Care (EHC) 

- EHC Services may include:
- Skilled Nursing Care
- Physical, Occupational, and Speech/Language Therapy in the home
- Increased respite care (up to 40 hours per week)
- Teaching and training activities related to the beneficiary's medical needs (for example, teaching a parent how to care for the child)

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force" 21

ECHO Home Health Care (EHC) Exclusions




- Anything covered under the basic TRICARE benefit or ECHO
- Any services provided outside of the beneficiary's primary residence
- Beneficiaries outside of the 50 U.S. States, D.C., territories
- Services provided for the purpose of covering primary caregiver(s) absences due to deployment, employment, seeking employment, or to pursue education. Except for those excluded activities, this exclusion does not otherwise restrict or prohibit the primary caregiver(s) from engaging in other activities they choose

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

22

ECHO and the Autism Care Demonstration




- In order to be eligible for the Autism Care Demonstration (ACD), ADFM beneficiaries must be enrolled in EFMP and registered in ECHO
- The ACD is not part of the ECHO benefit, however, and ECHO coverage limits (next slide) do not apply
- Beneficiaries in the ACD are eligible for other ECHO services
- Services provided under the ACD are a qualifying ECHO service to receive respite care

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

23

Costs under ECHO




ECHO Monthly Cost Share Amounts:

ECHO COST-SHARE AMOUNTS	
SPONSOR PAY GRADE CODE	SPONSOR COST-SHARE AMOUNT
E-1 through E-5	\$25
E-6	30
E-7 and O-1	35
E-8 and O-2	40
E-9, WO/WO-1, CWO-2, and O-3	45
CWO-3, CWO-4, and O-4	50
CWO-5, O-5	65
O-6	75
O-7	100
O-8	150
O-9	200
O-10	250

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"


24



Questions?

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

25



Contacts

- www.tricare.mil/echo (TRICARE Web site for ECHO benefit)
- **Humana Government Business** (East Region)
 - 1-800-444-5445; www.tricare-east.com
- **Health Net Federal Services** (West Region)
 - 1-844-866-WESST (9378); www.tricare-west.com
- **International SOS** (Overseas)
 - www.tricare-overseas.com (phone depends on location – numbers listed on website)

"Medically Ready Force...Ready Medical Force"

26

CE Credit & Certificates

- Continuing Education Credit: This program has been submitted to The Commission for Case Manager Certification for approval to provide board certified case managers with 1.0 clock hours.
- MFLN provides a Certificate of Completion for today's participants interested in receiving general training.

To receive CE credit or a certificate of completion, please complete the evaluation survey found at:
https://vte.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_byEY1gJ8FBJORSv

27

Upcoming Event

- **Title:** Detour Ahead: Person-Centered Contingency Planning
- **Date:** Wednesday, November 28, 2018
- **Time:** 11:00 a.m. - Noon ET
- **Location:**
<https://militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org/event/21076/>

28



**MILITARY FAMILIES
LEARNING NETWORK**

Find all upcoming and recorded webinars covering:

Personal Finance	Family Transitions
Military Caregiving	Network Literacy
Family Development	Nutrition & Wellness
Community Capacity Building	

<https://militaryfamilieslearningnetwork.org/mfln-events/>

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE



extension
Reach • Innovate • Impact
A part of the Cooperative Extension System



USDA

This material is based upon work supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Office of Military Family Readiness Policy, U.S. Department of Defense under Award Number 2015-48770-24368.
