



A Publication of the McChord AFB Retiree Activities Office for Air Force Retirees, their spouses or survivors. Department of the Air Force, 100 Joe Jackson Blvd, Customer Service Mall Rm 1001, McChord AFB WA 98438-1114; Phone (253) 982-3214 (Voice Mail 24 hours a day) Fax 253-982-5234. Email - rao@mcchord.af.mil Web Site www.mcchordrao.com Retiree Activities Office: Open 0900-1200 Monday - Friday

TriCare4U Passwords Beneficiaries who have not logged on to their TRICARE4U account recently shouldn't worry if they are prompted to change their password the next time they visit the site. The requirement to change passwords is due to recent system upgrade, and all registered TRICARE4U users - beneficiaries, providers and government users - will receive the automatic prompt. To start the password change process simply sign-in at <http://www.tricare4u.com> with the username and the latest password. Beneficiaries should select "update security information" on their personal profile page; providers should select "update my account" on their homepage and then "update security information;" government users should select "update security" in the left hand navigation of their homepage. New passwords must contain at least one uppercase letter, one lowercase letter, one number, one special symbol and be at least eight characters in length. TRICARE4u.com is the online resource for TRICARE for Life and Overseas beneficiaries and providers. The Web site allows both the beneficiary and provider to view claim status, their explanation of benefits, contact customer service in a secure environment and view patient eligibility. (Source: *Tricare Press Room*)

TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy

If you take medications on a regular basis for chronic conditions and have not already taken advantage of the TRICARE mail order pharmacy (TMOP), perhaps this is a good time to look at this option.

- It's Cost-Effective. A 90-day supply carries the same co-pay as a 30-day supply at retail pharmacies, with no shipping charges.
- It's Safe. For those who take multiple medications, there is an extensive system of checks and balances to ensure the proper medications are dispensed.
- It's Convenient. You can fill your prescriptions 24/7, and never need to drive to the pharmacy.
- It's Easy to Transfer. For relocation, vacations or temporary assignments, your prescriptions can follow you with a quick change of address with the contractor.

You can learn more about or enroll in TMOP by visiting the [My Benefit portal](#) on the TRICARE Web site. You can also [complete the registration form](#) online or call the Member Choice Center at (877) 363-1433 to switch to TMOP. (Source: *Tricare Press Room*)

New TRICARE Web page at <http://www.tricare.mil/alcoholawareness> sheds some light on alcohol abuse and promotes responsible drinking. The Web page serves as a starting place for beneficiaries to find information, links and news about alcohol, underage drinking, alcoholism and substance abuse. Another excellent resource is the DoD-funded site, <http://www.thatguy.com>, which highlights the social consequences of binge drinking. (Source *Tricare Press Room*)

The TRICARE Blog Thursday, April 16, 2009 - Don't Forget About DEERS

Posted by: Major General Elder Granger

Keeping all of your family's information up-to-date in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is essential for maintaining your TRICARE benefit coverage. Updating your information is simple, and in this blog, you will find the necessary resources to help you avoid the unnecessary headache of losing your TRICARE coverage. The last thing I want is for you to experience a lapse in coverage because your information in DEERS was not updated. Remember, while keeping DEERS current is simple, it is ultimately your responsibility, so please take a look at the following information.

What is DEERS? DEERS is a worldwide, computerized database of uniformed services members (sponsors), their family members and others who are eligible for military benefits. TRICARE uses the information in DEERS to verify TRICARE eligibility. For an overview on DEERS, visit TRICARE's [eligibility Web page](#).

When do I update DEERS? Any time you or your family experiences a life-changing event, remember to update DEERS. Keeping your information updated will prevent you from losing your health care eligibility. Examples include:

- Retiring or separating from active duty
- Activating or deactivating from National Guard or Reserve
- Changing your service status (enlisted to officer, changing branch, etc.)
- Getting married or divorced
- Having a baby or adopting a child
- Moving
- Becoming eligible for Medicare (sponsor or family member)
- Losing a family member

How do I update my information? Simple. There are a number of ways to update your information:

In Person To add or remove family members, visit a local ID card office. You can search for an office near you by ZIP code, city, state or country by visiting the [ID card office locator](#). Call the office first to verify address and business hours.

By Phone Call the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office at 1-800-538-9552 to update your home address, e-mail and phone numbers. (TTY/TDD for the deaf: 1-866-363-2883)

By Fax Fax home address, e-mail or phone number changes to the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office at 1-831-655-8317.

By Mail Mail changes to the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office. You must include supporting documentation if you are updating a family member's status:

Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office

Attn: Change of Address

400 Gigling Road

Seaside, CA 93955-6771

Online You have two options for updating personal information online:

1. Visit the [DEERS Web site](#) and follow the steps to update your home address, e-mail and phone numbers online.

2. Via the [Beneficiary Web Enrollment Web site](#). The site is linked directly to the DEERS database, so when you make changes, it updates your information in DEERS and with your regional contractor.

Oh No! I'm not eligible in DEERS. What do I do? If you find that you are not eligible in DEERS, contact the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office at 1-800-538-9552. Your eligibility is ultimately determined by your branch of service. For questions about your eligibility requirements, contact your service representative. Once your eligibility is established, maintaining your information in DEERS is up to you.

(Source: *The TriCare Blog*)

A Glimpse at the Many Sides of Alcohol Consumption Alcohol use and abuse has long been a concern of the Department of Defense (DoD). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), excessive alcohol use is the third leading lifestyle-related cause of death in the United States each year – linked to approximately 79,000 deaths. Awareness begins with understanding alcohol content and differences in the types of abuse. In the United States, a standard drink is one that contains 0.6 ounces (13.7 grams or 1.2 tablespoons) of pure alcohol. Generally, this amount of pure alcohol is found in: 12 ounces of regular beer or wine cooler, 8 ounces of malt liquor, 5 ounces of wine, 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits or liquor (e.g., gin, rum, vodka, whiskey). Understanding the standard for drinks is an easy way to monitor alcohol consumption to reduce potential risks. In general, it is not the type of alcoholic drink, rather the amount of alcohol consumed that affects a person. Alcoholism or alcohol dependence is the most extreme alcohol use problem. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) reports that nearly 17.6 million adults in the United States are alcoholics or have alcohol problems. The four main symptoms of alcoholism are: Craving – the strong need to drink, Loss of control – not being able to stop drinking after starting, Physical dependence – withdrawal symptoms such as nausea, sweating or shakiness after stopping, Tolerance – the need to drink greater amounts of alcohol to get “buzzed.” Alcoholism is a disease and like many others, it lasts a lifetime. The NIAAA reports that the chance for developing alcoholism is influenced both by a person's genes and by his or her lifestyle. Alcohol abuse is different from alcohol dependence. Abusers may not be addicted to alcohol, but the drinking affects one’s health, interpersonal relationships or ability to work. Abuse includes heavy drinking, binge drinking or both. The 2005 DoD Survey on Health Related Behaviors Among Active Duty Personnel reports young men in each service branch had significantly higher rates of heavy drinking than their civilian counterparts. Of the young men in all branches of the military, 32.2 percent engaged in heavy drinking, compared with 17.8 percent of civilian men. On average: Heavy drinking is more than two drinks per day for men or more than one drink per day for women. Binge drinking is five or more drinks during a single occasion for men or four or more drinks during a single occasion for women. The DoD developed a web site and campaign to raise awareness of the negative effects of binge drinking at <http://www.thatguy.com>. TRICARE launched an informational web page at <http://tricare.mil/alcoholawareness> to help create awareness about binge drinking, alcoholism and underage drinking. Learn more about alcohol consumption by visiting the NIAAA or CDC Web sites at <http://www.niaaa.nih.gov> and <http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol>. (Source: *Tricare Management Activity* by Alexis D. Washington)

UNDERSTANDING HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) estimates approximately one in three American adults—nearly 65 million people—have high blood pressure, or hypertension. High blood pressure is a serious condition that increases your risk for heart disease and stroke. High blood pressure can also lead to other health issues like atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), kidney disease, blindness and congestive heart failure. What makes high blood pressure even more dangerous is that it has no outward symptoms, enabling it to easily go undetected. The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to be tested regularly by your health care provider.

Blood Pressure Readings

Blood pressure is measured in millimeters of mercury (mmHg) and recorded with two numbers, systolic pressure “over” diastolic pressure “under”.

- Systolic pressure, or the top number, measures pressure as your heart beats.
- Diastolic pressure, or the bottom number, measures pressure as your heart relaxes between beats.

Normal blood pressure for adults is less than 120/80. The NHLBI and the American Heart Association both define high blood pressure in an adult as a systolic pressure of 140 mmHg or more and a diastolic pressure of 90 mmHg or more.

Prevention and Management

If your health care provider determines that you have high blood pressure, there are several treatment options. (Continued on the next page.)

An effective first step is to adopt a healthy lifestyle, which includes:

- Losing weight, if you're overweight
- Exercising
- Following a healthy diet
- Monitoring salt intake
- Drinking alcohol in moderation
- Quitting smoking

If these daily lifestyle changes do not bring your high blood pressure down, your health care provider may prescribe medication to control it. The next time your blood pressure is checked, keep an eye on those numbers. If you have any questions about high blood pressure, ask your health care provider for more information or visit the NHLBI's "Your Guide to Lowering High Blood Pressure" Web site at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/hbp/index.html.
(Source: *TriCare Health Matters Bulletin*)

With TRDP coverage, there is no reason to skip routine dental care According to a recent survey conducted last year by the American Dental Association (ADA), there is a rising incidence of skipped dental appointments among Americans. Despite scientific evidence that supports a strong relationship between good dental health and overall wellness, dental care is still considered a luxury item by many. Part of the reason behind this "silent epidemic" of skipping visits to the dentist can be attributed to economics. In recent months, more Americans than ever before have lost their jobs and, subsequently, their employers' dental insurance plans. Many are fearful of taking time off work and jeopardizing the jobs they have been able to retain, and others are tightening their budgets and opting to pay the mortgage, household bills and other medical bills first. Moreover, access to dental care can be limited in many rural areas, adding to the problem. Whatever the reason for putting off routine dental visits, it is important to remember that prevention is always less expensive than fixing problems later. Those who forgo seeking even the most routine dental care are really only shorting themselves: without good dental health, oral diseases like gingivitis can lead to more serious health problems down the road if left untreated. That is why it is important to take advantage of the benefits offered under the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP). Both the Basic and Enhanced Programs provide TRDP enrollees with affordable coverage for routine diagnostic and preventive services such as exams, x-rays, cleanings and fluoride treatments at 100% of the program allowed amount, without having to meet any deductible or apply any of the annual maximum amount toward the services, thereby making them an excellent value. This routine coverage is available with no waiting period to satisfy, and the option to choose any licensed dentist within the TRDP service area gives enrollees broad access to quality dental care. As important as it is to practice good oral hygiene at home, including brushing, flossing and maintaining a healthful diet, obtaining professional dental care like routine cleanings and fillings now, may prevent the need for more expensive root canals and crowns later on. With coverage under the TRDP, enrollees have no reason to put off paying regular visits to their dentist for routine dental care and taking care of little problems before they turn into big ones. *Source: Delta Dental of California*)

Traveling Overseas? Effective October 1, 2008, enrollees in the Enhanced TRDP are now covered for emergency services when traveling outside the Enhanced TRDP enrollment service area (the 50 United States and District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Canada). If you are planning a vacation outside this area, the American Dental Association (ADA) and the TRDP would like to remind you of some important things to keep in mind about your dental care and TRDP benefits should the need for unexpected, emergency dental care arise.

Be proactive.• The ADA recommends that you have a thorough dental examination before you go—especially if you will be traveling in developing countries or in remote areas without good access to dental care. Left to chance, emergency dental care may be uncomfortable, dangerous and expensive—and dental care providers in developing regions may not have adequate resources, equipment or supplies to take all the recommended precautions for preventing disease transmission. *(Continued on the next page.)*

Before you travel outside the U.S., the ADA suggests that you check with the health department or ministry in the destination country to see what national guidelines are in place for dentists who practice there.

Dentists in the U.S. are held to a high standard of care; each state has a board of dentistry that oversees all practicing dentists, and these boards have rules and regulations that dentists must follow. However, this may not be the case in some other countries. Here in the U.S., people often ask their family and friends for referrals to health care providers. If someone you know has received dental care in the foreign country, you will be visiting and they seem satisfied, ask for a referral to that particular dentist. **Be prepared.** • The ADA has noted several resources that may help you find a dentist abroad and ensure you obtain safe and adequate dental treatment while traveling. The Organization for Safety and Asepsis Procedures (OSAP) has a Traveler's Guide to Safe Dental Care; it includes a checklist for safe dental treatment abroad. For more information, visit www.osap.org. Before you travel, ask your dentist if he or she has contacts in dental fraternity groups such as the Academy of Dentistry International, the International College of Dentists or the Pierre Fauchard Academy. The foreign embassy offices in Washington, D.C. or a local consulate may also be helpful. Many countries have dental associations that can provide referrals. The ADA has compiled contact information about dental associations, societies and organizations from around the world. A dental school in another country may also be an option—check the FDI World Dental Federation web site. Dental referrals may be available from a hotel concierge, the American Consulate or the American Embassy in the country that you are visiting. **Be knowledgeable.** • The best insurance is to have your teeth in tip-top shape before you leave. However, it is also important to know your TRDP benefits and be aware of what treatment is required and necessary should you happen to experience a dental emergency while traveling abroad. Consult your TRDP Enhanced Program Benefits Booklet for information on obtaining emergency dental care overseas. You can view the Benefits Booklet online and even download a copy from the website to have for easy reference. It may be a good idea to pack your booklet in your luggage, just in case you need to refer to it. (Source: TRDP Newsletter Volume 7, Issue 2)

New Withholding Rates Published Many servicemembers, military retirees and annuitants, and Federal Government civilian employees paid by the Defense Finance Accounting Service (DFAS) will soon see their paychecks increased as the new IRS tax withholding rates are introduced to incorporate the new Making Work Pay credit. DFAS reminds their pay customers that it is their responsibility to insure enough wages are withheld to cover their tax liability. IRS publication 919 available at the [IRS website](http://www.irs.gov) provides additional guidance for tax withholding. The IRS press release on the new withholding rates (together with a link to the new withholding tables) and the Making Work Pay Credit is available at the [IRS website](http://www.irs.gov). (Source Veterans Report)

Recovery Payment for Disabled Vets

One element of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, recently signed by President Obama, provides a one-time payment of \$250 to individuals who get Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security benefits and to disabled veterans that are in receipt of VA Compensation and Pension. Disabled veterans recovery payments will be deposited to the same account that you have on file with VA and are expected to begin arriving sometime this summer. **No action is required on your part.** For more information, contact the VA at 1-800-827-1000. (Source NAUS)

Senior Economic Stimulus Benefits “The check is in the mail.” In May, retirees and other Social Security beneficiaries will get an extra \$250 per person from Uncle Sam, as part of the economic stimulus bill, which has been signed into law. The so-called senior payment, \$250 for individuals, \$500 for couples who both receive some Social Security benefit, will go to retirees, older veterans, SSI (Supplemental Security Income) beneficiaries, and people with disabilities. Recipients will not have to fill out a tax form or do anything unlike the stimulus rebate of 2008. They just wait for the money to show up. They will get the money the same way they get Social Security, either through direct deposit or through a check in the mail. Federal and state retirees who do not receive Social Security benefits also will qualify to receive the payment but may have to file 2009 tax returns to receive it. (Source: RAO Scott AFB)

President Proposes 2010 VA Budget If accepted by Congress, President Obama's first proposed budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) would increase VA's budget from \$98 billion this fiscal year to \$113 billion for the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, 2009. The new budget provides greater benefits for Veterans who are medically retired from active duty, provides the resources for effective implementation of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, and supports additional specialty care in such areas as prosthetics, vision and spinal cord injury, aging, and women's health. The proposed fiscal year 2010 budget also proposes new funding to carry VA services to rural communities that are too often unable to access VA care. (Source: *Military.com*)

DFAS News: Were you aware each branch of the Services had their own newsletter available on line? Below are the website addresses for these newsletters. You may want to bookmark yours.

Army Echoes: <http://www.armyg1.army.mil/RSO/echoes.asp>

Navy Shift Colors: <http://www.npc.navy.mil/referencelibrary/publications/shiftcolors>

Marine Corps Semper Fidelis:

http://www.manpower.usmc.mil/portal/page?_pageid=278,2017336&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

Air Force Afterburner: <http://www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner/> (Source: *DFAS*)

New e-Afterburner posted on Web site

The April 2009 edition of the *e-Afterburner* has been posted on the Air Force retiree Web site at www.retirees.af.mil/afterburner/. This edition is available in both .doc and .pdf formats for downloading and printing. (Source: www.retirees.af.mil)

Vietnam Veterans Launch Health Council Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) recently launched its www.veteranshealth.org website, which offers information on the health risks encountered by the military and the resources and benefits available to them. Additionally the site develops educational materials for medical schools, nursing schools and teaching hospitals and advocates for new health care initiatives. The program also aims to be the forum for an ongoing forum for health professionals, employee representatives, advocacy organizations, and health care firms. For information, write to VVA, 8605 Cameron St., Suite 400, Silver Spring, Md. 20910, or call toll-free at (800) 882-1316. (Source: *Military.com Veterans Report*)

Madigan Army Medical Center News

Retiree Health Fair Madigan Army Medical Center sponsors the 2009 Retiree Health Fair May 15 from 7:30 am to 11:30 am at the American Lake Club on North Fort Lewis. Preventative health screenings, resources and information will be available to all retired military beneficiaries, including the pneumonia vaccine, legal advice, nutrition care, diabetes information, and cholesterol testing and pain management. Organizers suggest that attendees bring shot records and note taking materials. For more information, please call Dr. Teresa Bruder at (253) 966-3757. (Source: *MEDCOM MAMC*)

Healthcare Consumer Committee Meeting June 3 Managed care will conduct a quarterly Healthcare Consumer Committee Meeting (HCCM) on June 3, from 10:45 am to 11:45 am at the Cascade Community Club. Installation/Forces Command commanders and staff, Family Readiness Group representatives, and spouses/Family members usually attend to get the most up to date information that Madigan Army Medical Center has to offer. Reference Madigan's efforts to make patient visits patient-centered. Please join us and share your department/clinic's information during the Q&A discussion portion of the meeting. (Source: *MEDCOM MAMC*)

McChord Heritage Museum Needs Volunteers The McChord Museum is always looking for retired aircraft maintainers who might enjoy restoring old military aircraft. The museum has a variety of propeller driven and jet aircraft undergoing restoration or ongoing preservation. If you are looking for an enjoyable past time, give the museum a call: Ray Jordon at 982-2485 or Chuck Bowen 982-2545. For more on the Museums aircraft visit the website at www.mcchordairmuseum.org

RAO VOLUNTEERS NEEDED Do you need a little something extra to help fill your days? The McChord Retiree Activities Office has an ongoing need for volunteers. The RAO desk is staffed by retiree volunteers, spouses and survivors. Our hours of operation are 0900 to 1200 hours Monday through Friday. You may volunteer for one day a week, one day a month or as many days as you like, the choice is yours. Volunteers answer phones and do research on questions from fellow retirees, their spouses and survivor's questions on benefits such as Tricare, Tricare for Life, Delta Dental, Retiree Pay matters, and Veterans programs and more. Working with fellow retirees can be extremely enjoyable; it is a satisfying feeling knowing that you have helped a fellow retiree or survivor with their needs. It is also great to get together and rub elbows with your fellow retirees and their spouses all working together to help the local military retiree community. We host a business luncheon at the McChord Club on the second Thursday of each month. Feel free to stop by and check us out or you can call and volunteer at (253) 982-3214 or e-mail us at rao@mcchord.af.mil.

McChord COMMUNITY CENTER ACTIVITIES for May

Base Theater: Free weekend movies call (253) 982-5836 or visit at <http://www.mcchordafb.us/theater.html> for the current schedule and synopsis.

Special Services from the Vet Clinic: Pet Parade May 9, - 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Pet Day, May 9, 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., 10:30 a.m. registration, fun, prizes, and competitions.

May 9, the Veterinary Clinic will be doing a vaccination clinic. This will be held at the clinic, and will be by appointment only. We will have information and give-aways for people when they come over from the Pet Fair.

DOG CATEGORIES:

- o Best Looking
- o Best Costume
- o Best Obstacle Course

CAT CATEGORIES:

- o Best Looking
- o Best Costume

NON CANINE/FELINE CATEGORY:

- o Best looking

For more information call 982-0719/0720

Wrestling

UFCR 98 LESNAR vs. MIR 2 May 23, at the Pub & Deli. 5 p.m. doors open, \$5 admission, Food & door prizes.

Garage Sale, May 23, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the McChord Express Store Parking Lot

McChord COMMUNITY CENTER ACTIVITIES June

Garage Sales June 6 & June 20, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the McChord Express Store Parking Lot

9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the McChord Express Store Parking Lot (Non-Commercial Event)

Father/Daughter Dance 19 June, 7-9 p.m. at the McChord Club & Community Center. Desserts, dancing, flowers and photos—for “daddy’s girl” and her “hero.” Advance tickets required \$15/couple. On sale through June 18. Call 982-0719

Events at the Pub & Deli

Outdoor Movie Night, Sat. May 16, 4 p.m. Pub & Deli BBQ, Food, door prizes & games. \$5

admission. Outdoor Movie starts at 20:45 **Outdoor Cinema** June 26, 8:30 - 11 p.m. at the Pub & Deli. Free movie with pizza & drinks available for sale



***RETIRED
&
FIT***



**Madigan Army Medical Center
Welcomes You To The 2009
Retiree Health Fair**

May 15, 2009

**American Lake Community Center
North Fort Lewis**

For Information Call: 253-966-3757

Lab Draws Start At 0630

Health Fair Hours: 0730-1300

- **Health Information**
- **Preventive Screenings**
- **Open To All Retired Military Beneficiaries**

**Action Officer: Dr. Teresa Bruder, RN, PhD
Department Of Preventive Medicine**



MCCHORD'S Main Base Edition RECYCLER

MCCHORD RECYCLES TODAY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW ~ APRIL 2009

The List 2009

McChord's Recycler is a product of the Qualified Recycling Program (QRP) Committee:

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- Toner & Ink Jet Cartridges
- * CD, DVD & Floppies
- Plastic Bottles
- Shrink & Bubble Wrap
- Plastic Shopping Bags
- * Eye glasses
- * Ovens
- * BBQ's
- * Electronics Computers & TV's*
- * Notebooks
- * Clothing
- * Shoes
- * Pallets
- Anything with a Cord or runs on Batteries*
- Gas and Oil-Free Yard Equipment

* = Take to the Recycling Center public drop off

Federal Recycling Program



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