



## T H E M I L I T A R Y C O A L I T I O N

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Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
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July 13, 2005

Honorable Donald H. Rumsfeld  
Secretary of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Military Coalition, a consortium of nationally prominent military and veterans organizations representing more than 5.5 million active duty, Guard and Reserve, retired and former members of the uniformed services, plus their family members and survivors is writing concerning the management of health care benefits for residents of Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) facilities in Washington, DC and Biloxi, MS.

Recent media reports indicate that some AFRH residents are taking legal action against the home due to alleged decline in the health care benefits earned by them in service to the nation.

The majority of AFRH residents are military retirees who have completed 20 or more years of active military service. Most residents are entitled to TRICARE or TRICARE for Life. TMC would appreciate information on what plans are in place to inform residents about their TRICARE or TFL health care benefits, assistance regarding referrals into the TRICARE network, and arrangements for TRICARE services at AFRH or from a Military Treatment Facility (MTF). We also would appreciate information on the number of TRICARE and TFL eligibles and participants at the facilities.

Some residents -- especially those with service-connected disabilities -- opt to obtain their care from the VA medical centers in Washington DC and Biloxi, MS. TMC requests information on the AFRH's coordination of access to VA health care for residents enrolled in the VA health care system, the number enrolled, and the number of VA patients.

At an earlier meeting with AFRH management, Coalition representatives were informed of a plan to establish a stand-alone mail order pharmacy program, distinct from TRICARE and VA pharmacy services. TMC would appreciate an update on this project, its cost, and the policy supporting it.

In general, TMC is most interested in understanding broad policy and procedures for the coordination and delivery of health care benefits to AFRH residents eligible for TRICARE and VA health care.

The Military Coalition appreciates the Department's support for the men and women whose service to the nation has earned them access to the AFRH and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

The Military Coalition  
(Signatures enclosed)

cc: Chairmen and Ranking Members, Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Committees