



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

SEP 26 2003

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

FROM: HQ USAF/SG
110 Luke Avenue, Room 400
Bolling AFB, DC 20032-7050

SUBJECT: Open Access Appointing at Military Treatment Facilities (MTF)

I fully support ASD(HA)'s intent to continuously improve the access and satisfaction of our beneficiaries through the implementation of open access (OA). I continue to encourage medical treatment facility (MTF) commanders to consider implementing open access (OA) appointing. Before implementing open access, MTF commanders must carefully research and analyze their health care delivery plan, processes, and resources to ensure they can sustain OA appointing and provide a consistent service to our beneficiaries. The MTF commander is the best judge to determine if he/she can implement and sustain OA appointing.

Both the *Commander's Guide to Access Success*, the *Open Access Review and Recommendations (OARR)* (https://phsd.afms.mil/webpages/Health_Care/Open_Access.htm) are excellent guides as MTFs perform their OA analysis and develop/execute their implementation plan. To standardize OA across the MHS, those clinics performing OA appointing must use the OA appointment type (OPAC) for their same day appointing services. This mandate does not preclude MTFs from using other appointment types, as needed. To further provide guidance, an OA Working Integrated Project Team (W-IPT) has been chartered to develop standard business rules, appointing, and staffing methodologies to ensure a consistent service for our beneficiaries.

I appreciate your continued efforts and dedication to serve our deserving beneficiaries, and meet our promise to provide 1-7-28 access to care. My point of contact for OA is Major Marissa Koch, at (703) 681-6196, e-mail: marissa.koch@pentagon.af.mil.


JAMES G. ROUDEBUSH,
Major General, USAF, MC, CFS
Deputy Surgeon

Attachment:
OASD/HA, Memo, 11 Sept 2003

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THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301-1200

SEP 11 2003

LTH AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM FOR SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY ^{Sim}
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY ^{Mike}
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE ^{Peach}

SUBJECT: Open Access Appointing at Military Treatment Facilities (MTF)

Open Access (OA) appointing is an effective tool that MTF commanders can use to improve access to care and overall customer satisfaction. The fact that an MTF is meeting access standards using a different methodology should not preclude considering open access as an additional tool. All MTF commanders should closely examine their appointing process and staffing to determine to what extent OA will be an effective tool to improve access in their primary care clinics and, if feasible, ensure that those plans are integrated in the organization's business plan. MTFs also need to evaluate the practicality of expanding OA to specialty clinics and do so where warranted.

The *Commander's Guide to Access Success* (<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/tai/cguide.htm>) has been provided as the guidebook for OA implementation. This will allow MTF commanders to assess factors such as operational commitments, phone capability, manpower, nurse triage, and provider availability in order to tailor OA to individual facilities. The standard OA appointment type must be used in each clinic to allow for benchmarking and trending of the OA tool. The TRICARE Operations Center will continue to provide support as commands develop and execute their OA implementation plans and will facilitate sharing of lessons learned regarding OA and other innovative ways of improving access and delivering quality healthcare throughout the Military Health System.

I appreciate your continued efforts and support in the implementation of this important program. Strong leadership at all levels will result in the successful implementation of Open Access appointing, resulting in improved access to care and delighted customers.

My point of contact for Open Access is CAPT Dan Wasnechak, at (703) 681-0064 or by e-mail at daniel.wasnechak@tma.osd.mil.

Bill

William Winkenwerder, Jr., MD