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HEALTH AFFAIRS

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301-1200

20 JUL 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

SUBJECT: Ensuring Reserve Component Have Full Access to Department of Defense (DoD)
Military Treatment Facilities (MTF) for Treatment and Evaluation of Adverse Events
from DoD Directed Immunizations

Title 10, United States Code for the Armed Forces directs that members of the Reserve components who incur or aggravate any injury, illness, or disease while performing active duty for less than 30 days, or inactive duty training are entitled to medical care appropriate for the treatment of the injury, illness or disease. Adverse reactions from DoD-directed immunizations are line of duty illnesses. Therefore, when a member of the Reserve component presents for treatment at an MTF, expressing a belief that the condition for which treatment is sought is related to receiving an immunization during a period of duty, the member must be examined and provided necessary medical care.

Once treatment has been rendered or the individual's emergent condition is stabilized, a Line of Duty and/or Notice of Eligibility will be determined as soon as possible. No treatment beyond that justified to stabilize the condition or emergency is authorized until Service connection is validated. Reserve component members should seek medical attention with their personal healthcare providers for injuries, illness or disease unrelated to duty.

Healthcare providers must submit a Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS-1) form for vaccine reactions that result in a hospital admission, loss of duty for greater than 24 hours, or suspected to have resulted from the contamination of the vaccine. The DoD and Food and Drug Administration encourage health care providers and individuals to report to VAERS any clinically significant adverse event occurring after the administration of any vaccine licensed in the United States. Reports to VAERS may be made in writing or by calling 1-800-822-7967. Reporting instructions are available on the Internet at <http://www.fda.gov/cber/vaers.htm>.

Providing MTF access to members of the Reserve components who may have health problems resulting from DoD-directed immunizations is our responsibility and an important way to keep trust with this large portion of the Total Force.


Dr. Sue Bailey

cc
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Vice Chief of Staff, Army
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