



HEALTH AFFAIRS

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON, D C 20301-1200

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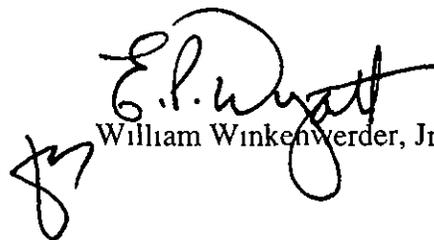
MEMORANDUM FOR SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF THE MARINE CORPS
DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF

SUBJECT Completeness of Deployment Medical Records

In my memorandum of April 11, 2003, entitled Safeguarding Deployment Medical Records, I stressed the importance of documenting the health care provided to all deployed servicemembers and ensuring incorporation of that information into permanent health records following deployments. Our goal is to ensure proper documentation of health care. These actions will improve subsequent health care and help veterans access the Department of Veterans Affairs care and benefits, eliminating many of the types of problems encountered following the Gulf War.

Please provide an assessment of your success in meeting the Department of Defense goals of ensuring that deployment health care has been documented and that both paper and electronic records are posted to individual permanent medical records and annotated on DD Form 2766 for veterans of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. In addition, please provide your plans to accurately capture and incorporate deployment health care information into the Standard Inpatient Data Record and/or the Standard Ambulatory Data Record or other electronically accessible data systems.

I would like to know how soon we can reliably access and analyze these electronic data systems, particularly those relating to hospital care. Please provide your assessments and plans by August 8, 2003. My point of contact is COL John Gardner at (703) 578-8524. Thank you for your continued support of our force health protection efforts.


William Winckenwerder, Jr., MD