



HEALTH AFFAIRS

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

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MEMORANDUM FOR DEPUTY SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY  
DEPUTY SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY  
DEPUTY SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE ✓

SUBJECT: Schedule II Controlled Substances Waiver for Electronic Approval

This is a follow-up to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) memorandum of 20 May 1990, subject as above. In May, the Defense Medical Systems Support Center (DMSSC) was granted an exception to Title 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1306.05(a), which requires practitioners to write prescriptions for Schedule II controlled substances in ink or indelible pencil or using a typewriter and prescriptions to be manually signed by the practitioners. This waiver was granted to the Composite Health Care System (CHCS) after a demonstration of CHCS in operation. The Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) waiver letter, dated March 26, 1990, specified certain conditions that must be satisfied by the military treatment facilities (MTFs). The DMSSC cover letter and the DEA waiver letter are attached.

Our objective remains to work closely with the DEA in keeping them informed of the status of CHCS and how we intend to meet the conditions specified in the waiver letter. Toward this end, a "good will" meeting was held between DMSSC and DEA staff to discuss the conditions of the waiver and to inform DEA of the status of CHCS. The DEA recommended that DMSSC establish a suspense date for meeting the conditions specified in the waiver letter. The DEA also indicated that CHCS sites will be visited in the future. These visits, however, would only take place after DMSSC notifies the DEA that CHCS sites have implemented procedures to satisfy the conditions specified in the waiver and have begun transmitting orders for Schedule II drugs electronically. DMSSC discussed with the DEA the use of dial-up terminals for processing Schedule II drug orders and no additional requirements were specified for this processing mode.

As recommended by DEA, DMSSC proposes a target date of 31 January 1991 for meeting the conditions specified in the DEA waiver letter. If your sites cannot meet this target date, please provide DMSSC with a schedule by 31 December showing the revised date for meeting the waiver conditions specified by the DEA. DMSSC personnel will be available to conduct preliminary site visits to prepare the Services for DEA visits.

If you have any questions, the DMSSC point of contact for this action is Mr. Ken Busch, who may be reached at (703) 756-0985.



Harold Koenig, RADM, MC, USN  
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense  
(Health Services Operations)

Attachments