



1925-2025
Legacy. Impact. Possibilities.

March 7, 2025

Defense Health Agency
7700 Arlington Blvd., Ste 5101
Falls Church, VA 22043-5101

Dear Telita Crosland:

On behalf of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), I write to raise serious concerns that ASHA members across both TRICARE's East and West regions are experiencing, leading them to reduce or cease taking TRICARE patients and, in some cases, forcing clinics to close their doors.^{1,2}

ASHA is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for 241,000 members, certificate holders, and affiliates who are audiologists; speech-language pathologists (SLPs); speech, language, and hearing scientists; audiology and speech-language pathology assistants; and students.

Audiologists specialize in preventing and assessing hearing and balance disorders as well as providing audiology treatment, including hearing aids. SLPs identify, assess, and treat speech, language, cognitive, and swallowing disorders. Audiologists and SLPs are communication specialists who work with individuals across the lifespan to maximize functional independence, safety, and the ability to fully participate in their lives.

On February 12, ASHA began receiving messages from concerned providers stating that they had not been paid by TRICARE for services delivered 2025. In 10 days, over 125 providers have shared the following issues that are impacting their ability to continue to treating TRICARE beneficiaries.

Non-Payment or Partial Payment for Services

Providers report that they have not been paid yet in 2025 or have received paper checks for \$0.00. Several providers report that they are owed tens of thousands of dollars in unpaid claims, making it difficult or impossible to pay their employees and overhead. One provider shared that they had to take a personal loan to make payroll and keep their business afloat while several others have had to reduce employees' hours or close their practices completely. Many have shared that they are no longer able to serve TRICARE beneficiaries because it is not financially feasible to do so. The very few who have received some form of payment shared that only a portion of the claim was paid with no explanation of benefits or remittance advice provided. These payments came as paper checks as they were unable to set up an electronic funds transfer due to issues with the provider portal.

Provider Portal Problems

Providers report that the provider portal is frequently down, and they receive technical error messages when attempting to log in. If they are able to get in, all of their submitted claims are marked as pending regardless of submission date. In addition, physicians are unable to get into the portal to submit referrals and/or prior authorizations as required.

Credentialing Errors

With the change from Healthnet Federal Services to TriWest Health Alliance, providers report that they have been dropped from the network after being assured that their credentialing would transfer. Several providers shared that the contracts they negotiated have never been signed by TriWest and that providers who were successfully credentialed by TriWest are not showing up in the online system. Many providers were told on the phone that their credentialing was “good to go” only to find out they are in the system as not credentialed. Providers that were moved from TRICARE East to TRICARE West states are not showing up in the system at all.

Lack of Communication

Providers have tried for weeks to reach out and solve the above issues on their own via email, phone, messages to the Defense Health Agency, and even calls to their members of Congress. Providers are increasingly frustrated as emails go unanswered and phone hold times are over four hours. When they do speak to someone, they are given contradictory information on provider status, documentation needed, claims status, and portal problems.

These clinicians have been providing high-quality patient-centered care to TRICARE beneficiaries for years. They have faithfully served military families and have helped them hear, speak, eat, think, and communicate with their loved ones. Providers want to continue serving this population but need your help to address the above issues and make it financially feasible to do so.

We respectfully request a meeting as soon as possible to discuss solutions and determine if we can be of service in sharing information with our members, who are your providers. Please reach out to ASHA’s Director of Health Care Policy, Value and Innovation, who handles TRICARE issues for the association, at rbowen@asha.org.

Sincerely,



A. B. Mayfield-Clarke, PhD, CCC-SLP
2025 ASHA President

¹ Littlehales, A. (2025, February 17). *Speech language pathologists impacted by TRICARE East claims change, reimbursement failures*. 13News Now. <https://www.13newsnow.com/article/news/health/tricare-issue-reimbursement-kiggans-wittman-speech-pathologist/291-6cb65b06-cbca-443d-a337-4cca24cb95fc>

² Jowers, K. (2025, February 19). *Tricare snafus cause medical shortfalls for military families*. Military Times. <https://www.militarytimes.com/pay-benefits/military-benefits/health-care/2025/02/19/tricare-snafus-cause-medical-shortfalls-for-military-families/>