THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

OCT 6 1998

MEMORANDUM FOR SURGEON GENERAL OF THE ARMY
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE NAVY
SURGEON GENERAL OF THE AIR FORCE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR MEDICAL READINESS, J-4, THE JOINT STAFF

SUBJECT: Policy for Pre- and Post-Deployment Health Assessments and Blood Samples

The Department of Defense policy shall be to use the attached Pre-Deployment Health Assessment and Post-Deployment Health Assessment for all deployment health assessments conducted pursuant to the requirements of DoD Instruction 6490.3, "Implementation and Application of Joint Medical Surveillance for Deployments," August 7, 1997, and this policy memorandum. These health assessments document the general health status of deploying and redeploying military members. Deployment-related mental health screening will be addressed in a separate policy memorandum.

Deployment Health Assessments and deployment-related blood sample collections, as described below, shall be required for all troop movements of active and reserve component personnel resulting from a Joint Chiefs of Staff/Unified Command deployment order for 30 continuous days or greater to a land-based location outside of the United States that does not have a permanent U.S. military treatment facility (i.e., funded by the Defense Health Program). Routine shipboard operations that do not involve field operations ashore for over 30 days are exempt from this policy memorandum.

Deployment Health Assessments

- Pre-Deployment Health Assessments shall be administered at home station or at mobilization processing stations before deployment.
- Post-Deployment Health Assessments shall be administered in the theater of operation before redeployment to either home station or a mobilization processing station.
- A copy of any completed Pre-Deployment Health Assessment or Post-Deployment Health Assessment shall be mailed within 30 days of completion to the Deployment Surveillance Team, 5113 Leesburg Pike, Suite 701, Falls Church, VA 22041.
- The original assessment shall be placed in the medical treatment record.

Deployment-Related Blood Samples

- The pre- and post-deployment-related blood sample collections required by DoD Instruction 6490.3 shall be met by routine participation in Service programs for periodic or pre-deployment screening for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection.

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- If an HIV screening sample has not been collected within the 12 months before deployment, a pre-deployment blood sample is required for the purposes of screening for HIV and for meeting the requirement for a pre-deployment blood sample.
- Pre-deployment-related blood samples, if required, shall be collected at home stations or at mobilization processing stations before deployment.

This policy provides guidance to achieve the requirements outlined in DoD Instruction 6490.3 and Public Law 105-85, Sec. 765, "Improved Medical Tracking System for Members Deployed Overseas in Contingency or Combat Operations." With deployment of the Preventive Health Care Application (PHCA) throughout the Military Health System beginning in October 1998, the Health Enrollment Assessment Review (HEAR) module of PHCA will provide a health assessment instrument to obtain baseline and periodic health status information on military personnel. When HEAR is operational, it will offer a more robust instrument to assess pre- and post-deployment health status. The objective of pre- and post-deployment health assessments will continue to be quick confirmation and documentation of a service member's health readiness for deployment or redeployment and to determine if there is a need for a clinician's evaluation before deployment or redeployment. Future revisions of deployment health assessments shall require pilot testing and question validation before being put into use.

This policy is effective immediately and shall be included in Service and Joint Staff plans and policies for joint medical surveillance and force health protection.

Dr. Sue Bailey

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Attachments:
1. Pre-Deployment Health Assessment
2. Post-Deployment Health Assessment