



MOPH June 2010 Department of Pennsylvania News Bulletin

Health Care Reform Update 34:

Starting this week, Medicare beneficiaries across the country should begin receiving copies of a brochure “Medicare and the New Health Law – What it Means for You” in their mailboxes. The mailing from Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) outlines key provisions of the Affordable Care Act for people with Medicare as well as members of their families. The mailing is being sent in both English and Spanish. It encourages beneficiaries to log on to www.medicare.gov or call 1-800-633-4227 to get their questions about Medicare or the Affordable Care Act answered and reminds them to be on the alert for possible scams. The first benefit that many people with Medicare will receive as a result of the passage of the new law is a one-time check for \$250, if they enter the Part D donut hole and are not eligible for Medicare Extra Help. Beginning next year, the Affordable Care Act ensures that Medicare beneficiaries will get free preventive care services like colorectal cancer screening and mammograms, in addition to a free annual wellness visit. The law also includes new tools to help fight fraud by helping Medicare crack down on criminals who are seeking to scam seniors and steal taxpayer dollars. You can view the brochures online at,

<http://www.medicare.gov/Publications/Pubs/pdf/11467.pdf>.

[Source: Sen. Bill Nelson msg 25 May 23010 ++]

Sears Hometown Stores:

Sears is calling upon all military veterans to participate in an opportunity to win and operate a Sears Hometown store. No purchase is necessary to enter or win. The contest is open to legal U.S. residents, who are military veterans, have a minimum of \$100,000 net worth, \$10,000 of which is liquid, have successfully passed the initial application and are 18 years of age or older or the legal age of majority in their state of residence as of date of entry. Prize includes: select store fixtures and select point of sale materials, licensing, building permits, store set-up, 90-day rent, select office equipment and furniture, insurance related to store and administrative fees needed to open and run the Sears Hometown Store for 90 days. Available locations can be found at www.searshometownstores.com/oro/001/markets.html. To enter go to www.searshometownstores.com/veteran.html and complete an application. The Operation Stores and Stripes Contest ends 25 JUN 2010 at 1500. Contest rules and the winner names (available after SEP 30) can be found at the same website.

[Source: NAUS Weekly Update 21 May 2010 ++] 2010 Edition

VA Handbook:

The latest edition of the Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents Pamphlet can be obtained from the Department of Veterans Affairs online or by mail. It updates the rates for certain federal payments and outlines a variety of programs and benefits for American veterans. Most of the nation's 25 million veterans qualify for some VA benefits, which range from health care to burial in a national cemetery. In addition to health-care and burial benefits, veterans may be eligible for programs providing home loan guaranties, educational assistance, training and vocational rehabilitation, income assistance pensions, life insurance and compensation for service-connected illnesses or disabilities. In some cases, survivors of veterans may also be entitled to benefits. The handbook describes programs for veterans with specific service experiences, such as prisoners of war or those concerned about environmental exposures in Vietnam or in the Gulf War, as well as special benefits for veterans with severe disabilities. In addition to describing benefits provided by VA, it provides an overview of programs and services for veterans provided by other federal agencies. It also includes resources to help veterans access their benefits, with a listing of phone numbers, websites, and a directory of VA facilities throughout the country.

The 2010 publication in English can be downloaded at no cost from VA's Web site at http://www1.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp. A Spanish version can be downloaded.

Heart Medical Devices Costs:

Costs for patients with chronic heart failure and coronary artery disease are going up because more physicians are turning to pricey, surgically implanted devices such as medically coated stents and cardioverter-defibrillators, a new report finds. Researchers led by Dr. Peter Groeneveld of Philadelphia VA Medical Center examined Medicare claims from 2003-2006 and focused on patients aged 66-85 who were diagnosed with the two conditions. The researchers found that when adjusted for inflation, the average costs for coronary artery disease treatment grew from \$12,160 in 2003 to \$12,721 in 2006, while the cost for chronic heart failure patients went up from \$17,153 to \$18,371 in the same period. The researchers also found that use of stents coated with medication boosted Medicare's overall cost for coronary artery disease in people aged 66-85 by \$3.32 billion and by \$774 million for chronic heart failure patients. The findings are slated to be released 20 MAY at the American Heart Association's Quality of Care and Outcomes Research in Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke 2010 Scientific Sessions in Washington D.C.

[Source: HealthDay News article 20 May 2010 ++]

PTSD Update 48:

A study shows that there may be a reason that those with chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) deal with more physical health issues as they age: Their immune system has been compromised. The study is yet more evidence to support the idea that people with PTSD go through chemical changes after a psychological injury. Lead author Monica Uddin, a researcher with the Department of Epidemiology at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, and her colleagues began with the theory that the increase in physical health issues - such as heart disease - in those with PTSD may come from immune system problems. To that end, they used blood samples from 100 people in the Detroit Neighborhood Health Study. Of those, 23 had been diagnosed with chronic PTSD while 77 had not, though many had been diagnosed with other mental health issues, such as depression. By looking at genes in those blood samples, they found that the people with PTSD had three areas where genes had been methylated - turned on, essentially - at higher levels than those without PTSD. One of those areas was hearing. "Among the genes uniquely methylated in the PTSD-

affected group, it is striking that the second-most enriched cluster - sensory perception of sound - directly reflects one of the three major symptom clusters that define the disorder,” Uddin wrote. That cluster is exaggerated startle response.

The researchers found that this response tends to develop over time, which raised questions about whether the chemical changes are immediate, or if they also develop over time. Or, do the differences in genes exist before people develop PTSD? The researchers also found that the people with PTSD were less likely to “turn on” immune-system genes. This “suggests a biologic model of PTSD etiology in which an externally experienced traumatic event induces downstream alterations in immune function by reducing methylation levels of immune-related genes,” the study stated. The researchers said that may be because a person’s most necessary systems respond to danger, while everything else slows. Usually, when the danger is gone, everything goes back to normal. But some people stay at some level of that hyper-alert state. In addition to the lack of activation of immune system genes, the researchers looked at levels of antibodies to a normally latent herpes virus - cytomegalovirus - that usually remains symptom-less. But in those with a weakened immune system, it can cause anything from flu-like symptoms to visual impairment, inflammation of the brain, pneumonia, diarrhea and hepatitis. They found that biomarkers of immune response to infection were “significantly higher” among those with PTSD, which may show their immune systems have been compromised. The researchers said further study would be important for service members and veterans with PTSD in terms of developing appropriate psychological and drug-based treatments, “particularly in the wake of an increasing number of military veterans returning home after recent wars worldwide.”

[Source: NavyTimes Kelly Kennedy article 20 May 2010 ++]

Military History Anniversaries:

Jun 01 1813 - Capt John Lawrence utters Navy motto "Don't give up the ship"

Jun 02 1944 - WWII: Allied "shuttle bombing" of Germany begins, with bombers departing from Italy and landing in the Soviet Union

Jun 02 1969 The Australian aircraft carrier Melbourne slices the destroyer USS Frank E. Evans in half off the shore of South Vietnam killing 74 American sailors

Jun 03 1861 - Civil War: Union defeats Confederacy at Philippi, WV in first land battle of the war.

Jun 03 1864 - Civil War: Gen Lee wins his last victory of Civil War at Battle of Cold Harbor

Jun 03 1952 Korean War: A rebellion by North Korean prisoners in the Koje prison camp in South Korea is put down by American troops.

Jun 04 1845 - Mexican-American War: Conflict begins

Jun 04 1919 - Latin America Interventions: U.S. Marines invade Costa Rica

Jun 04 1940 - WWII: British complete the evacuation of 300,000 troops at Dunkirk.

Jun 04 1942 - WWII: Battle of Midway Island begins. Japan's 1st major defeat in WW II

Jun 05 1917 - WWI: Ten million U.S. men begin registering for draft.

Jun 06 1918 - WWI: U.S. Marines enter combat at the Battle of Belleau Wood. 1st U.S. victory of WW I

Jun 06 1944 – WWII: D-Day: 150,000 Allied Expeditionary Force lands in Normandy, France

Jun 07 1932 - Over 7,000 war veterans march on Washington, D.C., demanding their bonus pay for service in World War I.

Jun 07 1942 - WWII: Japanese troops lands on Attu, Aleutian Islands

Jun 07 1965 - Vietnam: US troops ordered to fight offensively

Jun 08 1776 - American Revolution: Battle of Trois-Rivières - American attackers are driven back at Trois-Rivières, Quebec.

Jun 08 1967 - Six-Day War: The Naval Intelligence ship USS Liberty attacked in the Mediterranean by Israel killing 34 and wounding 171.

Jun 09 1863 - Civil War: the Battle of Brandy Station, Virginia.

Jun 09 1945 - WWII: Japanese Premier Kantaro Suzuki declares that Japan will fight to the last rather than accept unconditional surrender.

Jun 09 1999 - Kosovo War: The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and NATO sign a peace treaty.

Jun 10 1953 - Korean war: Battle of Outpost begins and lasts through the 18th.

Jun 10 1898 - Spanish American War: U.S. Marines land on the island of Cuba.

Jun 10 1965 - Vietnam War: The Battle of Dong Xoai begins.

Jun 10 1999 - Kosovo War: NATO suspends its air strikes after Slobodan Milošević agrees to withdraw Serbian forces from Kosovo.

Jun 11 1775 - American Revolution: In war's first naval battle Unity (US) captures Margareta (Br)

Jun 12 1918 - WWI: First airplane bombing raid by an American unit, France

Jun 14 1775 American Revolution: The U.S. Army is founded when the Continental Congress authorizes the muster of troops.

Jun 14 1944 - WWII: First B-29 raid against mainland Japan

Jun 15 1859 - Pig War: Ambiguity in the Oregon Treaty leads to the "Northwestern Boundary Dispute" between U.S. and British/Canadian settlers.

Jun 15 1898 - Spanish American War: U.S. Marines attack Spanish off Guantánamo Cuba

[Source: Various May 2010 ++]

MILITARY TRIVIA 5:

1. The American actor Douglas Fairbanks Jr. was given the British Distinguished Service Cross for commanding a flotilla of raiding craft for Admiral Louis Mountbatten's commandos during World War II.
2. The great military leader Duke of Wellington, Napoleon's nemesis, was an accomplished yo-yo player. At the time, the yo-yo was known as a bandalore.
3. Emil R. Goldfus of Brooklyn, New York was in reality Colonel Rudolf Abel, the Soviet intelligence agent convicted of spying on 1957, who was exchanged for downed American U-2 reconnaissance pilot "Francis Gary Powers in 1962.
4. The first war in which soldiers wore machine-made uniforms was the American Civil War.
5. At the Battle of the Marne in 1914, French reinforcements rushed from Paris to the front in order to help fend off the advancing Germans in commandeered Renault taxis. Each cabbie was paid a 27% tip on top of his metered fare.
6. Major Clark Gable's army discharge papers in 1944 were signed by President-to-be Ronald Reagan, then a captain.
7. The army of Persian kin Xerxes I crossed the Hellespont--the strait between Europe and Asia--in 480 B.C. on two bridges of boats. Alexander the Great duplicated the feat 146 years later.
8. The youngest U.S. Army officer ever to be promoted to general was George Custer, a graduate of West Point, who became a general at age 23--14 years before his infamous battle of Little Big Horn.
9. The American flag during the Spanish-American war in 1898 contained only 48 stars. The five states not yet admitted to the Union and not represented on the flag were Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arizona, Alaska and Hawaii.
10. General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing won a Pulitzer Prize in 1932 for his history book 'My Experiences in the World War'.
11. Following the British defeat at Dunkirk in June 1940, British actor Norman Shelley made the stirring broadcast vowing that "we shall fight in the fields and in the streets...we shall never surrender" He sounded just like Winston Churchill and read the address so that the prime minister could deal with pressing matters of state.
12. The inspiration for the name Rough Riders--the name of the elite fighting unit Theodore Roosevelt organized for the Spanish-American War-- the Rough Riders Hotel in Medora, North Dakota, where Roosevelt had tried ranching.
13. Hyman Rickover, the man credited with propelling the Navy into the nuclear age, served on active duty for sixty years. He was forced to retire at age 82 by President Ronald Reagan.
14. Triremes--the fast-moving warships that helped the Greeks rule the Mediterranean during the fifth century B.C. carried 170 oarsmen. They were seated at banks of 31, 27 and 27 oars on each side of the ship.
15. 10,000 pounds (50 tons) of feed were consumed daily by the 5,000 horses that pulled the artillery for Napoleon's Army of the North in 1815. That comes to 20 pounds per horse.

[Source: www.triviacountry.com/19_Military_Trivia.htm May 2010 ++]

