DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY MEDICAL COMMAND
2050 WORTH ROAD
FORT SAM HOUSTON, TX 78234-6000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

OTSG/MEDCOM Policy Memo 06-013

MCCS

Expires 30 March 2008

30 MAR 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDERS, MEDCOM REGIONAL MEDICAL COMMANDS

SUBJECT: Policy Guidance for Separation Physical Examinations

1. References:

a. Memorandum, OASD (HA), 14 October 2005, subject: Policy Guidance for Separation Physical Exams.

b. Memorandum, DASG-HS, 13 August 2004, subject: Physical Examinations and Screening Tests on Release From Active Duty.

c. Memorandum, OASD (HA), 16 June 1999, subject: Screening and Treatment Policy for Hepatitis C Virus.

d. Army Regulation (AR) 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness, 1 February 2005.

e. Department of the Army Pamphlet 40-501, Hearing Conservation Program, 10 December 1998.

2. Purpose: To issue new guidance on separation examinations. This memorandum supersedes reference 1b.

3. Proponent: The proponent for this policy is the Director, Health Policy and Services.

4. Policy:

a. In accordance with the 2005 National Defense Authorization Act, all Soldiers serving on Active Duty (AD) for 31 or more consecutive days are required to undergo a physical examination within 180 days of their separation from AD. The separation physical examination is an individual health assessment sufficient to evaluate the health of the Soldier at the time of separation. The intent is to determine whether any existing medical condition was incurred during AD service, provide baseline information for future care, complete the Soldier's military medical record, and also provide a final opportunity prior to separation to allow documentation of any health concerns, exposures, or risk factors associated with the Soldier's AD service.

b. This separation examination may only be waived if the Soldier has undergone a physical examination within 12 months before separation, and then only with the consent of the Soldier and concurrence of the unit commander.

c. Soldiers retiring from active service are required to undergo a medical examination prior to retirement, and will complete DD Form 2697, Report of Medical Assessment (see AR 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness, Chapter 8-12, for additional requirements.)

d. Reserve Component Soldiers must complete a DD Form 2796, Post-Deployment Health Assessment; DD Form 2697, Report of Medical Assessment; and have a separation physical prior to release from AD (REFRAD).

5. Responsibilities: Commanders, Regional Medical Commands, will ensure appropriate dissemination of this policy. Commanders, Medical Treatment Facilities, will ensure dissemination of and compliance with this policy by all privileged providers, and TRICARE staff.

6. Procedures:

a. Separation physical will include:

(1) Completion of a self-assessment tool/questionnaire by the Soldier (DD Form 2807, DD Form 2796, and/or DD Form 2697 as appropriate).

(2) Medical record review (health history and events, known conditions, and documented exposures).

(3) A face-to-face interview with a privileged healthcare provider to review and augment the available medical information and the self-assessment tool and/or questionnaire.

(4) A focused age-and gender-specific physical examination consistent with US Preventive Services Task Force recommendations (http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm), to include indicated specialty consultations and appropriate laboratory and imaging procedures.

(5) A termination audiogram and completion of a DD Form 2216, Hearing Conservation Data.

(6) A screening for the presence of hepatitis C antibodies will be offered if the Soldier is over age 35 at the effective date of separation.

(7) A final assessment regarding the Soldier's qualification for retention in accordance with AR 40-501, Standards of Medical Fitness, or need for referral to a Medical Evaluation Board.

b. Documentation of all the above in the Soldier's permanent medical record.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

WILLIAM H. THRESHER
Chief of Staff

CF:
Command Surgeon, Army National Guard
Command Surgeon, USARC
Command Surgeon, Human Resources Command
Command Surgeon, Army Reserve Command