

What's New with the Reserve Health Readiness Program

By: Kelly Kotch
FHP&R Staff Writer

The Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP), in partnership with the Armed Forces Reserve Components, is continuing to increase the medical and dental readiness of their Service members. RHRP provides medical and dental readiness services that include Periodic Health Assessments (PHAs), dental examinations and x-rays, limited dental treatment, immunizations, vision services, audio services, laboratory services, physical examinations, Post-Deployment Health Reassessments (PDHRAs), occupational health services, vaccine storage and distribution, and other services.

During FY08, RHRP provided over 850,000 medical readiness services to Service members in each of the 50 states, District of Columbia, and U.S. Territories. The demand has grown so much that those numbers were exceeded within the first nine months of FY09. In that period, RHRP provided services to almost 300,000 Service members. Those services included more than 120,000 Periodical Health Assessments, 135,000 dental exams, 160,000 immunizations, 110,000 vision screenings and eyewear exams, and 80,000 Post-Deployment Health Reassessments. Services also have been expanded to Reservists in Germany.

The RHRP recently enhanced its services in a variety of ways. It provides immunizations within the provider network, and also provides immunizations at group events such as drill weekends or annual training. The RHRP reduced the minimum numbers required to hold a group event and implemented multiple new initiatives focused on improving dental readiness.

To provide this wide range of medical, dental and behavioral health services, RHRP uses a nationwide network of over 36,000 private providers of various disciplines. They are trained on the Service Component-specific requirements for their Service members. These services are provided through three models: 'in-clinic' using the offices of the civilian provider network; 'on-site,' where providers perform group services at unit locations; and a 'call center' through which PDHRA assessments are conducted.

After medical and dental readiness service needs are identified and service requests are ordered and approved, the appointment or group event is coordinated and managed from beginning to end. For individual appointments, RHRP in conjunction with the Service member:

- Assigns a licensed provider within 50 miles and schedules an appointment
- Ships kits to the Service member with the needed information and materials
- Re-confirms the appointment with the Service member
- Receives the documentation from the provider
- Provides quality assurance checks to ensure all needed documentation is there and adheres to high quality standards

- Determines if the Service member has any deployment-limiting conditions and recommends further treatment or evaluation
- Provides dental treatment which will allow the Service member to be deployable
- Updates the pertinent Service Component medical and dental readiness database

For group events, RHRP in partnership with the Service Component unit point of contact:

- Confirms information about the types and numbers of services needed
- Arranges all the logistics of assigning providers, arranging for their travel, assembling and delivering the needed equipment, forms, etc.
- Sets up the event and provides the services
- Handles retrieval of equipment and documentation
- Provides quality assurance checks to ensure all needed documentation is there and adheres to high quality standards
- Determines if the Service member has any deployment limiting conditions and recommends further treatment or evaluation
- Updates the pertinent Service Component medical readiness database

The RHRP continues to evolve with the ever-changing Service Component requirements, helping them meet their essential but challenging medical readiness goals.

In addition to getting those services to the massive numbers of Service members across the nation and in the territories, RHRP is keenly interested in providing a quality product. As such, it asks its end users to complete satisfaction surveys and solicits feedback from the Service members' chain of command and Service Component POCs. Overall, the satisfaction rate is over 95 percent. However, RHRP is striving for an increase in this number.

More information about the RHRP can be obtained by emailing rhrp@tma.osd.mil or contacting the RHRP Program Manager, CDR Diedre Presley, at Diedre.Presley@ha.osd.mil.