

Avery Veterans' Corner

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Medicare

Medicare is health insurance provided by the federal government to individuals age 65 and older, as well as some adults with disabilities. All U.S. citizens and permanent residents 65 and older are eligible. To ensure the lowest monthly premiums, veterans must enroll within three months before or after their 65th birthday. Medicare and TRICARE work together — there is a branch of TRICARE called “TRICARE for Life” that becomes available when you enroll in Medicare Parts A and B (basic Medicare). Medicare becomes your primary insurance and TRICARE pays for any co-insurance and deductible. Medicare and VA benefits, however, do not work together. Medicare does not pay for any care received at VA facilities, but it will cover care at a non-VA facility.

Former Ineligible Veterans May Qualify

A new federal policy could help veterans with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and who are presently ineligible for benefits, get the medical care and benefits they need. The Department of Defense set down new guidelines to work with veterans who are trying to upgrade discharges to get medical help. This new set of guidelines is for veterans who have been diagnosed with PTSD or who do not realize they have PTSD. The DOD says this is in large part for veterans from the Vietnam War who were discharged without any record of having

PTSD because it wasn't understood in that time. So, unless they get diagnosed by a private doctor, they cannot be reinstated for help with their PTSD if they were declared ineligible with their discharge. The new guidelines don't mean every single veteran will get their benefits. It just means a review board will take PTSD cases under special consideration. Without these guidelines it was nearly impossible to get benefits reinstated after they were denied.

Benefits App

311VET is VBA's new benefits app, and it answers a wide range of questions about Veterans benefits, including what benefits you may be entitled to, how to apply for benefits, how different benefits are defined, and where to go to get more information about VA services. 311VET can provide information about most VA benefits, including pension, education, health, disability, loan, burial and career benefits. Download is FREE and available today.

See your VSO for more details.

For Internet assistance, go to your local county library.

For questions concerning veteran's benefits and to obtain needed forms call Georgia Henry, Avery County Veterans Service Office, at (828) 733-8211.

Comments and suggestions on the Veterans' Corner or Disabled American Veterans can be emailed to Mike Halus at averycountyveterans@gmail.com or call (828) 260-0620.