

PAIN CARE INITIATIVE IN MILITARY HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

The committee directs the Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, to develop a plan for a pain care initiative in all health care facilities of the uniformed services. The plan shall include elements to ensure that:

- (1) All active and retired members of the uniformed services and their dependents receiving treatment in health care facilities of the uniformed services are assessed for pain at the time of admission or initial treatment, and periodically thereafter, using a professionally recognized pain assessment tool or process; and
- (2) They receive appropriate pain care consistent with recognized means for assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and management of acute and chronic pain, including, in appropriate cases, access to specialty pain management services.

The committee directs the Secretary of Defense to study the feasibility of including pain care standards into any contract entered into by the Department of Defense for the provision of health care. These standards shall:

- (1) Be consistent with recognized means for assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and management of acute and chronic pain;
- (2) Provide medical and other health services through physicians and other practitioners appropriately credentialed or experienced in pain management;
- (3) Provide for referral of patients with chronic pain to specialists, and, in appropriate cases, to a comprehensive multidisciplinary pain management program;
- (4) Continue treatment for as long as treatment is required to maximize the quality of life and functional capacity of the patient; and
- (5) Permit physicians and other practitioners appropriately credentialed or experienced in pain management to make clinical decisions with respect to the need for and the extent and duration of pain care services.

The committee directs the Secretary of Defense to submit a report on the pain care initiative plan within nine months after the date of the enactment of this Act to the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Armed Services.