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**Department of
Veterans Affairs**

Memorandum

Date: SEP 3 2010
From: Deputy Under Secretary for Health for Operations and Management (10N)
Subj: Agent Orange Presumptive Workload
To: Network Directors (10N1-23)

1. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will be adding three new diseases to its regulations concerning presumptive service connection based upon herbicide exposure. The diseases are:
 - a. Hairy Cell Leukemia and other chronic B-cell leukemias
 - b. Parkinson's Disease
 - c. Ischemic Heart Disease
2. The proposed rule adding these diseases to the regulation was published on March 25, 2010. The final rule is expected to be published shortly. Adjudication of claims for service-connection for these diseases will not take place until after the final rule is published; however, development, including examinations, is underway.
3. In fiscal year (FY) 2010, the Veterans Benefit Administration (VBA) anticipates disability claim volume associated with the presumptive service-connection determinations to be 159,311, of which 69,957 are retroactive readjudications and 89,354 are new and reopened claims from Veterans. The disability compensation workload, the resulting increases in service-connected patients, and the increased combined service-connected percents will add new patients to VA's health care system and change the priority levels of Veterans currently enrolled. Further, it is assumed that each VBA case will result in disability examinations for the Veteran. It is estimated that 270,854 disability examinations will need to be performed.
4. Veterans Health Administration and VBA are working jointly on a pilot program regarding examinations for these three diseases. Disability Benefits Questionnaires (DBQ) have been developed and the program will be piloted in Pittsburgh, PA the week of August 30 or September 6, 2010. If the pilot is successful, the DBQs will be released throughout VA nationwide the week of September 15, 2010. The DBQs will not be available for private physician use until the DBQs are approved by the Office of Management and Budget.
5. If you have any questions or require additional information, you may contact Shawn Hardenbrook, Acting Director, Compensation and Pension Exam Program, at (615) 340-4068.



William Schoenhard, FACHE