



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1200 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

17 Jan 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (M&RA)
COMMANDER, JOINT TASK FORCE NATIONAL CAPITAL
REGION MEDICAL

SUBJECT: Service Review of Mefloquine Prescribing Practices

Some deploying Service members have been provided mefloquine for malaria prophylaxis without appropriate documentation in their medical records and without proper screening for contraindications. In addition, not all individuals have been provided the required mefloquine medication guide and wallet information card, as required by the Food and Drug Administration. Providing our Service members with the highest quality care is one of the most important things we do; thus, it is incumbent upon us to ensure our Service members are appropriately screened and informed about the medicines they are taking, and we must accurately record their prescriptions in their medical records.

The Department of Defense Instruction 6490.03, "Deployment Health," dated August 11, 2006, addresses the administration of Force Health Protection prescription products and remains in effect. It requires qualified personnel to dispense all Force Health Protection prescription products under a prescription, and that the prescription be recorded in individual medical records.

Please review your Service's quality assurance procedures for the use of mefloquine, with particular emphasis placed on screening for contraindications, documentation of patient education, and documentation of mefloquine prescriptions in medical records. The contraindications for mefloquine use are discussed in the attached Health Affairs Policy 09-017, "Policy Memorandum on the Use of Mefloquine (Lariam®) in Malaria Prophylaxis." Your review should include mefloquine dispensed at medical treatment facilities, pre-deployment processing locations, and in deployed locations. Your review also should confirm that your health care providers understand the important screening and documentation requirements associated with prescribing mefloquine.

Please provide me with the results of your review within 90 days of this memorandum, including deficiencies identified, and measures taken to correct them, along with a copy of any updated Service-wide policies addressing these issues. The point of contact for this matter is COL Scott Stanek. COL Stanek may be reached at (703) 575-2669, or Scott.Stanek@tma.osd.mil.

Jonathan Woodson, M.D.

Attachments:

As stated

Cc:

Surgeon General of the Army

Surgeon General of the Navy

Surgeon General of the Air Force

Medical Officer of the Marine Corps

Joint Staff Surgeon