Australian Government

Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004

MRCA Treatment Principles (Outreach Program Counsellors) Instrument 2012

Instrument 2012 No. MRCC 40

I, Warren Snowdon, Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, pursuant to subsection 286(3) of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004, approve this instrument made by the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission.

Dated this 24th day of September 2012

…Warren Snowdon…………………………………………………………

WARREN SNOWDON

The Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission, by its delegates, pursuant to subsection 286(2) of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004, varies the MRCA Treatment Principles (Instrument No.M21 of 2004) in accordance with the Schedule.

Dated this 14th day of September 2012

The Seal of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission

was affixed hereto in the presence of:

Ian Campbell Shane Carmody Major General Mark Kelly

IAN CAMPBELL SHANE CARMODY MAJOR GENERAL MARK KELLY

PSM AO DSC CHAIR and DELEGATE MEMBER and DELEGATE MEMBER and DELEGATE
[1] **Name of Instrument**

This instrument is the *MRCA Treatment Principles (Outreach Program Counsellors) Instrument 2012*.

[2] **Commencement**

This instrument commences, or is taken to have commenced, on 1 October 2012.
Schedule

1. Paragraph 1.4.1

*insert:*

**Australian Government’s Better Access initiative** means the mental health initiative described in the document entitled “Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists & General Practitioners through the Medical Benefits Schedule Initiative” *in force on the date in Schedule 1*.

**General information about VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service** means the DVA document of that name *in force on the date in Schedule 1* that, among other things, sets out the criteria for eligibility for VVCS.

**outreach program counsellor** means:

(a) a *psychologist* who:

(i) is registered as a psychologist with the Psychology Board of Australia; and

(ii) has been given a *provider number* and is eligible to provide psychological services under the *Australian Government’s Better Access initiative*; and

(iii) in the opinion of the *Commission*, has an adequate appreciation of veteran and military culture; or

(b) a *social worker (mental health)* who:

(i) is accredited as a Mental Health Social Worker with the Australian Association of Social Workers; and

(ii) has been given a *provider number* and is eligible to provide social work services under the *Australian Government’s Better Access initiative*; and

(iii) in the opinion of the *Commission*, has an adequate appreciation of veteran and military culture;
being a person who does not have a written contract (described as a Deed of Standing Offer) with the Commission or the Department in respect of the provision of a counselling service to an entitled person under the auspices of the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service.

outreach program counselling means the treatment of that name established by paragraph 7.7A.1 of the Principles — comprised of mental health counselling under the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service provided by an outreach program counsellor to an entitled person eligible for the treatment under the Principles.

Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service or VVCS means the service funded by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs that provides free, confidential and Australia-wide mental health counselling and group programs to Australian veterans, peacekeepers, their families, eligible current serving Australian Defence Force members and F-111 workers and their families.

VVCS OPC Provider Notes means the document approved by the Commission, the Repatriation Commission, a member of the Commission or Repatriation Commission or by the Secretary to the Department, entitled “Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Services (VVCS) Outreach Program Counsellors (OPC) Provider Notes”, and in force on the date in Schedule 1, that sets out the terms on which an outreach program counsellor is to provide outreach program counselling to an eligible entitled person.

VVCS criterion means a criterion in the DVA document “General information about VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service” under the heading “Who can use VVCS?”, being a criterion that relates to a person who is eligible for treatment under the Act.

2. Paragraph 2.6.1 and 2.6.2

omit (wherever occurring):

Vietnam Veterans Counselling Service

substitute:
3. **Paragraph 3.5.1(1)(o)**

    after the paragraph, insert:

    (oa) an outreach program counsellor — the amount worked out under the DVA document entitled “Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) Outreach Program Counsellors (OPC) Schedule of Fees”, in force on the date in Schedule 1, on condition that the treatment was provided in accordance with the Principles and the VVCS OPC Provider Notes as the Notes apply to the person as a psychologist or social worker (mental health), as the case may be;

4. **Paragraph 7.1.1**

    after: Principles;

    insert: or

    omit: (3) a Fee Schedule;

    substitute: (3) a Fee Schedule; or
    (4) VVCS OPC Provider Notes;

5. **Paragraph 7.1A.1 (including the Table)**

    substitute:
In order for the *Commission* to be taken to have arranged treatment provided to an *entitled person* by a *health care provider* in an item (denoted by a number) in Column A below, the treatment must have been provided in accordance with the section of the *Notes for Allied Health Providers* or with the *VVCS OPC Provider Notes*, as the case may be, for that item in Column B below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A</th>
<th>Column B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provider Type</td>
<td>Notes for Allied Health Providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chiropractors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Clinical Psychologists (except where providing service as <em>outreach program counsellors</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dentists, Dental Specialists &amp; Dental Prosthetists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Diabetes Educators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Dietitians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Exercise Physiologists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Neuropsychologists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Occupational Therapists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Occupational Therapists – Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Optometrists, Orthoptists &amp; Optical Dispensers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Osteopaths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Physiotherapists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Podiatrists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Psychologists (except where providing service as <em>outreach program counsellors</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Social Workers (General) (except where providing service as <em>outreach program counsellors</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. **Paragraph 7.7**

*after the paragraph insert:*

### 7.7A Outreach Program Counselling

#### 7.7A.1 The treatment of outreach program counselling is established under this Part and may be provided by an outreach program counsellor to an eligible entitled person in accordance with the Principles.

Note: paragraph 7.1A.1 requires outreach program counselling to be provided in accordance with the *VVCS OPC Provider Notes*.

#### 7.7A.2 An entitled person is eligible for outreach program counselling if:

- (a) the entitled person is eligible for VVCS; and
  
  Note: see paragraph 7.7A.3

- (b) in the opinion of the Commission:
  
  (i) the entitled person is unable to reasonably have access to a VVCS Centre due to the physical isolation of the person’s place of residence in Australia; or

  (ii) despite the entitled person having reasonable access to a VVCS Centre, there is a special reason for the person requiring outreach program counselling; and
(c) the outreach program counselling is provided to the entitled person by an outreach program counsellor pursuant to a referral from the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service.

7.7A.3 An entitled person is eligible for VVCS if he or she satisfies a VVCS criterion.

7.7A.4 For paragraph 7.1.1, prior approval for outreach program counselling is not required.

7. Schedule 1

substitute:

**SCHEDULE 1 DATES FOR INCORPORATED DOCUMENTS**

The date for:

1. Notes for Local Medical Officers (paragraph 1.4.1);
2. Department of Veterans’ Affairs Fee Schedules for Medical Services (paragraph 3.5.1);
3. Notes for Allied Health Providers (paragraphs 3.5.1 and 7.1A.1);
4. Optometrist Fees for Consultation (paragraph 3.5.1);
5. DVA Schedule of Fees Orthoptists (paragraph 3.5.1);
6. Pricing Schedule for visual aids (paragraph 3.5.1);
7. The fourth edition of the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (commonly known as DSM-IV) (paragraph 2.4.2A);
8. Fee Schedule of Dental Services for Dentists and Dental Specialists (paragraph 3.5.1);
9. Fee Schedule of Dental Services for Dental Prosthetists (paragraph 3.5.1);
10. Chiropractors Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
11. Diabetes Educators Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
12. Dietitians Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
13. Exercise Physiologists Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
14. Occupational Therapists Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
15. Osteopaths Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
16. Physiotherapists Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
17. Psychologists Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
18. Podiatrists Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
19. Social Workers Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
20. Clinical Counsellors Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
21. Speech Pathologists Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
22. Australian Government Department of Veterans’ Affairs Classification System and Schedule of Item Numbers and Fees — Community Nursing Services;
23. Notes for Coordinated Veterans’ Care Program Providers;
24. Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP) National Guidelines (paragraph 11.2A.1);
25. RAP National Schedule of Equipment (paragraph 11.2A.1);
26. Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Services (VVCS) Outreach Program Counsellors (OPC) Provider Notes (paragraph 1.4.1 and 7.1A.1);
27. Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) Outreach Program Counsellors (OPC) Schedule of Fees (paragraph 3.5.1);
28. General information about VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (paragraph 1.4.1);

29. Better Access to Psychiatrists, Psychologists & General Practitioners through the Medical Benefits Schedule Initiative


is 1 October 2012.