

**Department of Veterans Affairs
Charter of the
Special Medical Advisory Group**

1. Official Designation. Special Medical Advisory Group.

2. Authority. The Special Medical Advisory Group (Group) is authorized by statute, 38 U.S.C. § 7312 and operates under the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended by 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2.

3. Objectives and Scope of Activity. The Group advises the Secretary and the Under Secretary for Health on the care and treatment of enrolled Veterans and other matters pertinent to the operations of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA).

4. Description of Duties. The Group primarily provides advice and consultation to the Secretary and the Under Secretary for Health on various matters relating to care and treatment of disabled Veterans and other matters pertinent to VHA, including education and training of health care professionals, research and the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) role in support of Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security missions. The Group shall provide recommendations to the Secretary, through the Under Secretary for Health.

5. Official to Whom the Group Reports. The Group reports to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, through the Under Secretary for Health, and to the Under Secretary for Health directly.

6. Office Responsible for Providing the Necessary Support for the Group. VHA, VA, is responsible for providing support to the Group.

7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs in Dollars and Staff Years. Estimated annual operating costs for the Group are \$135,000 and 0.8 staff years. All members will receive travel expenses and a per diem allowance in accordance with the Federal Travel Regulation for any travel made in connection with their duties as members of the Group.

8. Designation Federal Officer. The Designated Federal Officer (DFO), a full-time VA employee, will approve the schedule of Committee meetings. The DFO, or designee, will be present at all meetings, and each meeting will be conducted in accordance with an agenda approved by the DFO. The DFO is authorized to adjourn any meeting when he or she determines it is in the public interest to do so.

9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meeting. The Group may meet 2 times annually and may have additional meetings if necessary.

10. Duration. There is a continuing need for the Group to assist the Secretary and Under Secretary for Health in carrying out the responsibilities described in 38 U.S.C. § 7312.

11. Group Termination Date. Authorized by law for an indefinite period, the Group has no termination date.

12. Membership and Designation. By statute, the Group membership shall include a disabled Veteran; members of the medical, dental, podiatric, optometric and allied health professions; and other individuals considered by the Under Secretary for Health to have experience pertinent to the mission of VHA. The Group will be composed of no more than 22 members. Several members may be Regular Government Employees, but the majority of the Group's membership will be Special Government Employees. A term of service for any member shall not exceed 3 years; however, the Secretary may reappoint any member for additional terms of service if needed for continuity and to ensure ongoing issues are transitioned to newer members.

13. Subcommittees. With the DFO's approval, the Group is authorized to establish subcommittees to perform specific projects or assignments as necessary and consistent with its mission. The Group Chairperson shall notify the Secretary, through the DFO and the Under Secretary for Health, of the establishment of any subcommittee including its function, membership and estimated duration. The objectives of the subcommittees are to make recommendations to the chartered Group with respect to matters related to the responsibilities of the chartered Group. Subcommittees have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the parent Group nor can they report directly to VA. A DFO, or alternate DFO, must be present for all subcommittee activities and take notes.

14. Recordkeeping. Records of the Group shall be handled in accordance with the General Records Schedule 6.2 or other approved agency records disposition schedules. Those records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.

15. Filing date.

Approved. 

Denis McDonough
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

7-30-2021
Date