DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS (VA)
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, 5 U.S.C. App. 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.

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 the Veterans Health Administration, including education and training of health care professionals, research, and VA's role in support of Department of Defense and 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: The Veterans Health Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, 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 $134,000 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. DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICER: The Designated Federal Officer (DFO), a full-time VA employee, will approve the schedule of Group meetings. The DFO or a 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 will meet up to twice annually.

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 the Veterans Health Administration. The Group will be composed of no more than twelve (12) 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 2 years; however, the Secretary may reappoint any member for additional terms of service upon the recommendation of the Under Secretary for Health, as necessary for continuity and to ensure ongoing issues are transitioned to newer members.

13. SUBCOMMITTEES: The Group is authorized to establish subcommittees, with the Designated Federal Officer's (DFO) approval, to perform specific projects or assignments as necessary and consistent with its mission. The Committee chair shall notify the Secretary and Under Secretary for Health, through the DFO, of the establishment of any subcommittee, including its function, membership and estimated duration. Subcommittees will report back to the Committee.

14. RECORDKEEPING: Records of the Committee shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 26 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. DATE CHARTER IS FILED:

Approved: Eric K. Shinseki
Secretary of Veterans Affairs

Date: 16 Apr 2010