

**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 (SMAG) 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. Ch. 10.

3. Objectives and Scope of Activity. The SMAG advises the Secretary of Veterans Affairs 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 SMAG primarily provides advice and consultation to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs 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 role of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in support of the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security missions. The SMAG shall provide recommendations to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, through the Under Secretary for Health.

5. Official to Whom the Committee Reports. The SMAG 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 Committee. VA and VHA are responsible for providing support to the SMAG.

7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs in Dollars and Staff Years. Estimated annual operating costs for the SMAG are \$190,000, which includes 0.8 full-time equivalent staff. 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 SMAG.

8. Designated Federal Officer. The Designated Federal Officer (DFO), a full time VA employee, will approve the schedule of Committee 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 SMAG may meet two times annually and may have additional meetings if necessary.

10. Duration. There is a continuing need for the SMAG to assist the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Under Secretary for Health in carrying out the responsibilities described in section 38 U.S.C. § 7312. However, the charter will expire 2 years from the date it is filed unless renewed by appropriate action.

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

12. Membership and Designation. By statute, the SMAG 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 SMAG will be composed of no more than 22 members. Several members may be Regular Government Employees, ex-officio and/or representatives, but most of the SMAG's membership will be Special Government Employees. A term of service for any member shall not exceed 3 years; however, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs may reappoint any member for additional terms of service if needed for continuity and to ensure ongoing issues are transitioned to newer members.

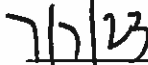
13. Subcommittees. With the DFO's approval, the SMAG is authorized to established subcommittees to perform specific projects or assignments as necessary and consistent with its mission. The SMAG Chairperson shall notify the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, through the DFO and the Under Secretary for Health, of the establishment of any subcommittee, including its function, membership and estimated duration. Subcommittees have no authority to make decisions on behalf of the parent SMAG 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 Committee shall be handled in accordance with 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



Date