

PUTT Launches "Audit TRICARE" Campaign to Expose Prescription Drug Pricing Disparities in Military Healthcare

Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency calls for national conversation on massive price differences between cash-pay generics and TRICARE PBM charges



**Pharmacists United for
Truth & Transparency**

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Pharmacists United for Truth and Transparency ([PUTT](#)) today announced the launch of its "Audit TRICARE" campaign ([AuditTRICARE.org](#)), a critical initiative designed to bring transparency to questionable pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) pricing practices that may be costing taxpayers millions while affecting healthcare access for military families.



We urge the Department of Defense to conduct an independent audit of TRICARE's prescription drug program to understand why our military's prescription medications are so expensive."

Monique Whitney

Using real-time pricing examples and state-based infographics, the campaign aims to start a national conversation about the stark price differences between common generic medications purchased without insurance and the prices charged to the federal government by TRICARE's PBM, Express Scripts. PUTT members whose families are on TRICARE or TRICARE for Life, sourced drug pricing information through TRICARE's prescription drug pricing portal, comparing the cost of generic medications on Tricare versus without insurance at pharmacies like Mark Cuban Cost Plus Drugs, Blueberry

Pharmacy and DiRx, who provide their medication cash price online.

Exposing Hidden Healthcare Costs

PUTT's preliminary research revealed significant disparities in generic medication pricing that demand immediate attention:

- Amlodipine, a commonly prescribed generic blood pressure medication, costs \$213.60 on TRICARE but less than \$6 for the same medication (dose and quantity) at Mark Cuban Cost Plus

Drugs

- Fluoxetine, the generic version of Prozac®, costs \$235.32 on TRICARE but \$7.74 for the same medication at Blueberry Pharmacy
- Omeprazole, a commonly prescribed acid reflux medication, costs \$665.58 on TRICARE but \$14.06 at DiRx

"While civilians can often purchase common generic medications at competitive cash prices, the federal government—through TRICARE—appears to be paying substantially more for identical medications through Express Scripts' managed formulary system," said PUTT Executive Director Monique Whitney, whose family members' military service includes the Marines and the Navy. "This creates a troubling situation where the government serves as both the plan sponsor funding these purchases and the entity responsible for oversight yet lacks transparency mechanisms to ensure fair pricing. We urge the Department of Defense to conduct an independent audit of TRICARE's prescription drug program to understand why our military's prescription medications are so expensive."

Campaign Objectives

Through the "Audit TRICARE" campaign, PUTT aims to:

- Demand Transparency: Call for clear, public reporting on the factors contributing to the prescription drug pricing within the TRICARE system, including detailed breakdowns of PBM fees, rebates, and administrative costs
- Encourage Oversight: Advocate for federal agencies to regularly and independently audit PBM pricing practices to ensure competitive, fair pricing for generic medications
- Protect Military Families: Ensure healthcare decisions - including the patient's choice of pharmacy - are based on the patient's best interest, not profit margins or self-dealing business arrangements
- Safeguard Taxpayer Dollars: At a time when the federal government is seeking greater fiscal responsibility, ensure government healthcare contractors are acting as fiduciaries, using fair pricing practices and preserving access for service members, veterans and their families

The Stakes for Military Healthcare

The prescription drug pricing disparities highlighted by the campaign have far-reaching implications:

- Military families may pay significantly more for common generic medications as a way to offset somewhat lower brand medication prices on TRICARE
- Taxpayers fund potentially inflated prescription costs without visibility into pricing rationale
- Healthcare resources that could serve more military families may be diverted to pay for excessive PBM administrative costs

"Our military families deserve healthcare transparency, and American taxpayers deserve to know how their dollars are being spent on prescription medications," said PUTT's President Deborah

Keaveny, whose daughter is currently on active duty in the Middle East. "When PBMs operate with limited oversight and zero pricing transparency, everyone loses except the middleman. There is no excuse for charging our service men and women and their families hundreds of times more for generic medications than they could purchase without TRICARE at a local pharmacy. This shouldn't be how we say 'thank you for your service and your sacrifices'."

A Call for Accountability

The "Audit TRICARE" campaign is intended to represent more than policy advocacy. PUTT's goal is to call for the transparency and accountability military families have earned through their service, Ms. Whitney said. PUTT invites healthcare advocates, military families, veterans, and concerned citizens to join this critical conversation.

"Transparency in healthcare pricing isn't a partisan issue—it's an American issue," said Brandi Chane, a pharmacy owner based in Weatherford, Texas and PUTT Board member whose mother is on TRICARE for Life. "When we ensure fair, competitive pricing for military healthcare, we strengthen both our commitment to those who serve and our responsibility to ourselves as taxpayers. It's the taxpayers who are funding these vital services."

For more information on how PBM practices affect patient care and the affordability of medication for consumers and end payers, visit PUTT's website at [TruthRx.org](https://www.truthrx.org).

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