To: Directors,

Date: September 16, 2022

From: Office of Field Operations

SUBJ: Providing an Alternate Contention Name for Exam Scheduling Requests (ESR)

Districts,

The Medical Disability Exam Office (MDEO) is notifying field users that beginning September 19, 2022, new functionality for providing an alternate contention name on the contention screen within VBMS, will be available for use. Once the alternate contention name has been provided, this functionality will automatically utilize the alternate contention name when drafting a new Exam Scheduling Request (ESR). The ESR will reflect the alternate name when sent to the MDE Vendors and within the CAPRI Worksheet. This alternate contention name will be used to clearly identify the specific disability that requires an examination. Current contention names cause confusion with the standard language and Medical Opinion language due to extraneous information beyond the identification of the specific disability in the contention name.

**When to use Alternate Contention Functionality**:

Claims processors should utilize this functionality prior to requesting an Examination Scheduling Request (ESR) in the Exam Management System (EMS).

**Examples:**

1. Service connection for lumbosacral strain, to include due to or secondary to service-connected disabilities, is granted.
   1. **Alternate Contention Name:** degenerative arthritis with spinal stenosis
      1. Identifying the service-connected condition as shown in the rated issues portion of the contention screen within VBMS.
2. Service connection for lumbosacral strain, to include as due as secondary to service-connected disabilities, is denied.
   1. **Alternate Contention Name:** lumbosacral strain
      1. Identifying the specific condition that requires examination.
3. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder with anxiety, depression, nightmares, flashbacks from falling in foxhole, anger issues and problems sleeping
   1. **Alternate Contention Name:** PTSD
      1. Identifying the primary specific condition that requires examination

Please see the attached “Alternate Contention Job Aid” for step-by-step instructions.

**Important Notes:**

Only Authorized Users can edit the 'Alternate Contention Name' after it has been populated in an ESR.

This guidance is only providing information on alternate contention names for use within VBMS EMS when requesting an ESR. The manual will be updated to reflect this change in **M21-1** **III.i.2.F.2.c. Identifying Contentions.**

Any questions may be directed to: [Medical Disability Examination Office](mailto:ContractExam.VBAVACO@va.go)

OFO's Point of Contact for questions is [Ryan Storetveit](mailto:ryan.storetveit@va.gov)

Office of Field Operations (OFO)

Project &Program management