



Pension and Fiduciary Service (P&F)

Pension Quality Call

Date: May 28, 2024

TMS: # VA4659505

AGENDA TOPICS

- [ITEM 1: STAR ERROR TRENDS](#)
- [ITEM 2: PACT ACT UPDATES](#)
- [ITEM 3: SPECIAL FOCUS REVIEWS \(SFRS\)](#)
- [CLOSING, QUESTIONS, NEXT QUALITY CALL](#)
- [SFR ATTACHMENTS](#)

AGENDA ITEMS

Agenda item: STAR Error Trends

Presenter: Jennifer Kunkel, Analyst

Target Audience: QRT and Management

Discussion:

A trend analysis was conducted regarding errors cited on National STAR Pension Quality Reviews completed between the months of **March 2024 and April 2024** (transactions completed between February 1, 2024, through March 31, 2024). STAR reviews are performed the following month after a claim is completed.

Review Month	Review Category	Total Reviewed	Total # of Errors	# Claims in Error	BE Errors	Recons Submitted	BE Accuracy %
Mar	Authorization	25	7	5	0	0	100.00%
	Rating	22	5	5	1	1	95.45%
	Total	47	12	10	1	1	
Apr	Authorization	25	5	9	1	3	96.85%
	Rating	22	8	11	0	0	100.00%
	Total	47	13	20	1	3	

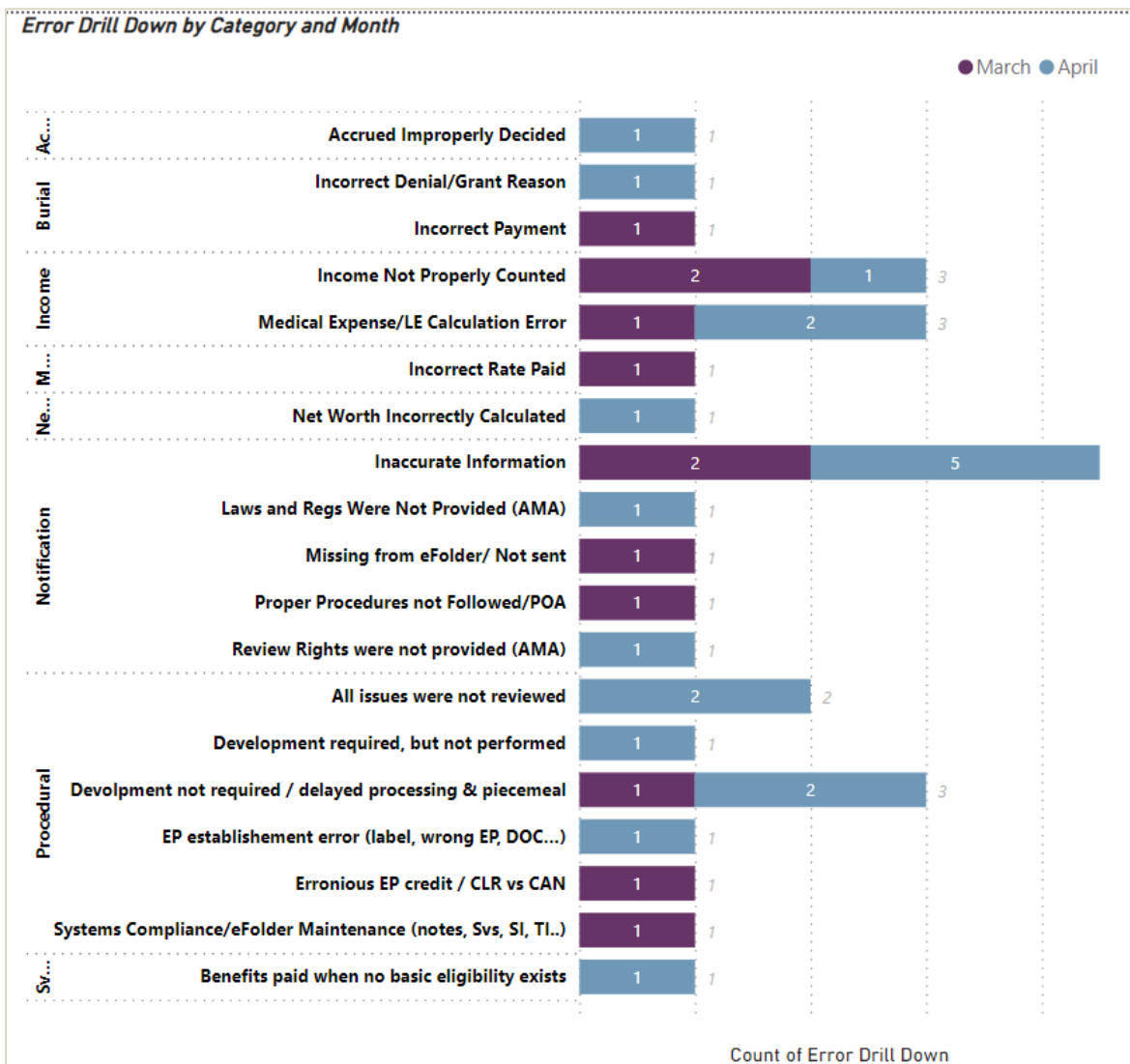
Out of a total of **94** claims reviewed for quality, **23** claims had a total of **32** errors cited; **2** of those claims had BE errors.

4 reconsiderations (recons) were submitted. 1 non-BE error was overturned, 3 are still pending.

The 32 cited errors were within the following categories:

March Reviews		April Reviews	
BE	Non-BE	BE	Non-BE
1 Income	1 Burial 2 Income 4 Notification 1 MOD 3 Procedural	1 Income	1 Accrued 1 Burial 2 Income 1 Net worth 7 Notification 1 Basic Eligibility 6 Procedural

The *Error Drill Down* graph below details the errors broken out by category/reasons:



Inaccurate notification letters continue to be the highest area of errors. Please continue to include all appropriate attachments and be sure to proofread for accuracy before releasing. Income counting and medical expense counting errors accounted for many errors and all the BE errors for these two months. Please be sure to communicate to the VSRs they are reviewing their claims for issues that would cause BE errors, such as income and medical calculations, income counting rules, effective dates, service eligibility and all claimed issues (like reviewing for A&A).

Procedural inaccuracies continue to increase. Please remind VSRs to review for ALL issues, perform complete development actions applicable simultaneously, and check the EP, claim labels and date of claims for accuracy.

Note that over the last 12 months, nine BE errors have been cited for Ratings and 11 for Authorization claims. While accuracy has improved for March and April 2024, increased BE errors in following months may cause accuracy to decrease below national goals.

References/Contacts

- ✓ STAR Reports https://vbaw.vba.va.gov/bl/21/star/reports/star_rpts20.htm
- ✓ Pension STAR Dashboard [Pension STAR Dashboard | Salesforce](#)

Agenda item: PACT Act Updates

Presenter: Jennifer Kunkel, Analyst

Target Audience:
QRT and Management

Discussion:

Recent Key-Releases and events:

- September 8, 2023 – SOP v4 released. Latest updates. (Reminder)
- May 1, 2024 – P&F released consolidated and updated FAQ document. It is posted on the P&F PACT Intranet site.
- May 3, 2024 – P&F Inquiry Response Highlights published clarification regarding burial reconsiderations.

PACT Burial Reconsiderations

For DIC reevaluations under the PACT Act where DIC was denied **prior to December 16, 2016** (PL114-315), *and* there was an accompanying burial claim previously decided from the same claimant, award SC burial benefits upon granting DIC on a PACT reevaluation. The claimant does not need to submit a new burial claim.

PL 114-315 is specific to allowing the payment of burial benefits without a claim when the Veteran's death occurred on or after December 16, 2016, however, this provision is distinct on granting benefits without the submission of a claim. [M21-1, Part XI, Subpart iii, 1.B.2.h](#) allows for the payment of additional SC burial benefits when the non-service-connected burial allowance has been paid. This guidance should also be applied to scenarios described above to grant SC burial benefits when a previously decided burial claim for the claimant is of record. Additionally, [38 CFR 3.1703\(b\)\(1\)](#) allows for payment of burial benefits when VA receives a

claim, except as provided in [38 CFR 3.1702\(a\)](#). There is no distinction that a “new” claim or application must be filed for burial benefits to be paid later.

[Inquiry Response Highlights - April 2024](#)

(Reminder) PACT Special Issues:

- Please use the correct SI when identifying a PACT claim: **PACT** or **PACT ACT DIC Reevaluation** SIs must be applied correctly on DIC contentions to indicate the correct type of PACT claim in VBMS Core.
- The **TERA Conceded** and **TERA Not Conceded** is an integral part of tracking PACT decisions. A reminder to all raters to please apply the correct rating special issue (**TERA Conceded** or **TERA Not Conceded**) on claims that meet the TERA threshold appropriately.

Please direct all PACT related questions to the FIT tool and select the PACT header.

References/Contacts

- ✓ PMC Intranet Site [PACT Act - Pension and Fiduciary Service \(va.gov\)](#)
- ✓ Questions [Field Inquiry Tool](#) (FIT).

Agenda item: Special Focus Reviews (SFRs)/Targeted Program Reviews (TPRs)

Presenters: Jennifer Kunkel, Christine Hohnholt, Shannon Hunsicker

Target Audience:
QRT and Management

Discussion:

P&F recently completed several SFRs which were discussed on the call and are attached for reference.

- PACT Act Follow-up SFR
- Child Dependency and Indemnity Compensation SFR
- Medical Mileage Follow-up SFR
- P.L. 116-315 Burial Transportation Changes Follow-up SFR

Closing Comments

P&F Quality Call Topics:

We will solicit for agenda topic(s) for each future Quality Call. If you have a specific topic suggestion, please feel free to email it to the Pension and Fiduciary (P&F) Quality mailbox at PFTNGQUALOVRST.VBACO@va.gov. For specific policy and procedures related topics, please send inquiries through the [P&F Service Field Inquiry Tool \(FIT\)](#).

Quality Call Bulletins

Quality Call Bulletins can be found within TMS along with call recordings. Once the monthly bulletin is finalized, information will be sent to the PMCs which will include the TMS #.

The next Quality Call is tentatively scheduled for July 2024.

Special Focus Review Attachments



PACT Act Follow Up
SFR_May 2024.pdf



SFR Children's
DIC_FINAL.pdf



Medical Mileage
Follow Up SFR_Final.p



PF SFR PL 116 315
Follow_UP Burial.pd