

December 21, 2006

ACCREDITATION OF VA PROSTHETIC AND ORTHOTIC LABORATORIES

1. PURPOSE: This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive defines procedures necessary for the management and quality assurance of Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Prosthetic and Orthotic Laboratories.

2. BACKGROUND: In 2003, VA conducted a program evaluation of the care and treatment provided to veterans who utilize prosthetics, orthotics, and sensory aids services. It was determined that care and treatment to veterans was compromised because a majority of VA Prosthetic and Orthotic Laboratories did not meet all of the criteria for industry accreditation

NOTE: Only five facilities were accredited as of January 15, 2003.

a. On May 17, 2004, the Under Secretary for Health issued VHA Directive 2004-020, which mandated that all VHA Prosthetic and Orthotic Laboratories become accredited either through the American Board for Certification (ABC) or the Board for Orthotist and/or Prosthetist Certification (BOC).

b. As of October 1, 2006, 58 out of 63 laboratories are accredited by either ABC or BOC.

3. POLICY: It is VHA policy that as of January 7, 2007, only accredited Prosthetic and Orthotic laboratories are allowed to fabricate prostheses and orthoses; and pursuant to ABC and/or BOC criteria, only certified Prosthetists and Orthotists may independently fabricate prostheses and orthoses.

4. ACTION: The medical center Director is responsible for:

a. Ensuring the accreditation and/or certification status of laboratories and practitioners associated with those laboratories for VA medical centers that have Prosthetic and Orthotic Laboratories.

b. Ensuring that no prostheses and orthoses are fabricated in an unaccredited laboratory.

c. Ensuring that all non-certified prosthetists and orthotists provide clinical services only under the direct supervision their certified counterparts.

5. REFERENCES: None.

6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY: The Office of Rehabilitation and Prosthetic Services (10P4R) is responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions may be directed to 202-461-7394.

7. RESCISSIONS: None. This VHA Directive expires December 31, 2011.

Michael J. Kussman, MD, MS, MACP
Acting Under Secretary for Health

DISTRIBUTION: CO: E-mailed 12/21/06
FLD: VISN, MA, DO, OC, OCRO, and 200 – E-mailed 12/21/06

THIS VHA DIRECTIVE EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2011