

Security and a Good History

Hello, everyone. You may recall that my last editorial centered around the security of our medical information systems and your requirement to notify us regarding staffing changes in your offices. I usually try not to discuss the same topic in subsequent Bulletins, but I decided to make an exception in this case because I think the issue is extremely important.

Trust. To have a successful medical certification program, we must trust our airmen to be open and honest when they complete their 8500-8 applications. The first thing I remember hearing in medical school was, "If you do nothing else, be sure to take a good history." That lesson was repeated over



and over again, and the most criticism that anyone received occurred when a student or resident failed to elicit a complete history from his or her patient.

Our system is based on trust, and it can be difficult or even impossible to discover a medical problem if the airman does not tell us about it. However, trust is a two-way street. When airmen "take a risk" and tell us about a problem, they have the right to expect that we will use the information responsibly. They should expect that we will do everything in our power to "clear" them to fly, and they should also expect that we will be a reliable and secure repository for their sensitive medical information.

Your responsibility. With the last idea in mind, I informed you that you would be receiving a series of communications regarding the Aerospace Medical Certification Subsystem (AMCS) and your responsibility to make sure that members of your staff who were no longer authorized access to the system were removed from the access list. In the last quarter of fiscal year 2009, we disabled 462 AMCS accounts (76 in July, 53 in August, and 334 in September). The large number in September coincides with the letters we

mailed to you asking for your support on this issue.

Continued refinements. We will continue to refine the process of assuring that no unauthorized individual has access to AMCS. Our information technology experts are working on a software update that will require you to validate the authorized users in your office every time you log onto the system. We expect the update to be completed and implemented by the end of February 2010.

Revised AME Order. And, finally, we are revising the aviation medical examiner (AME) order to require AMEs to immediately notify us when a member of their staff is no longer authorized access to the system.

I want to thank all of you for your response to my last editorial and the communications you have received. The security of our medical information systems is extremely important, and I really appreciate your help on this very sensitive issue.

—Fred

P.S. The manager of our Aerospace Medical Education Division, AAM-400, Dr. **Richard Jones**, has decided to retire. He has a long history of service, first in the United States Air Force and then as the AAM-400 manager. You will see an article about him written by Dr. **Robert Johnson** later in this Bulletin [see page 12], so I will simply close by saying, "Dick, thanks so much for all you have done for me, the FAA, our AMEs, and the aviators you have served so well. Congratulations and, most of all, HAVE FUN!"

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