



CHAPTER VI

Health Services

RECOMMENDATION NO. 46

The Commission recommends extension to Vietnam Era veterans of a complete episode of treatment for all non-compensable dental disabilities found to be present within one year after discharge from military service.

Background to Recommendation:

In 1919, outpatient dental benefits were first authorized and instructions were given for the disposition of dental claims, for establishment of a rating schedule, and for presumption of service connection for a one-year period after discharge. The veteran could apply for and be authorized treatment for service-connected disabilities repeatedly. Public Law 149, 83rd Congress (July 27, 1953), Fiscal Year Appropriation Act, discontinued the one-year presumptive period and instituted a time limit of one year after discharge for filing a claim. Emergency Interim Issue (EM 10-48), October 1, 1953, limited treatment to a one-time episode. The one-time rule was later amended to allow repeat treatment for service-connected conditions for (a) former POW's and (b) service-connected trauma, non-compensable conditions.

Vietnam Era veterans have not been given the benefit of the limited statutory presumption of eligibility for outpatient