

Dear PMC Members:

On Wednesday, July 18th, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) hosted an Open Door Forum (ODF) on Home Health, Hospice and Durable Medical Equipment (DME). Natalie Johnson Highsmith of CMS' Office of External Affairs moderated the forum.

The following were items discussed that are of interest to power mobility device (PMD) suppliers:

Competitive Bidding and Accreditation

Joel Kaiser of CMS reiterated the warnings provided at the special teleconference on the problems with the Competitive Bidding Submission System (CBSS), reminding suppliers that:

- 1) there is a 12-hour “timeout” feature which requires suppliers to keep track of their time on the system and to backup data;
- 2) a “pop-up” screen that prompts suppliers to change their user ID; suppliers should ignore this “technical glitch” and not change their ID; and
- 3) suppliers now have the option to submit a separate Excel file for item description information.

When asked by both the PMC and AA Homecare if there were any contingencies or flexibility on the July 20th bid submission deadline, Kaiser was uncompromising stating that CMS is in contact with the CBIC contractor and is confident that any supplier who is working to get the bid in on time. Kaiser also mentioned that he has heard trade press reports of Congressional efforts to call for an extension in the bidding deadline, but there has been no discussion on how to respond.

Regarding accreditation, CMS reminded suppliers that the August 31st deadline for accreditation has not moved and that suppliers who have submitted bids must be accredited by the end of August if they are to be awarded a contract. CMS also stated that the CMS Help desk is not trained to answer policy or operational questions and those suppliers should contact the accreditation bodies with those issues. Lastly, there has been no deadline established as to when all DME suppliers need to be accredited. Once determined, this deadline will be published on CMS' DME webpage.

Home Health and DME Anti-Fraud Demo

In the past month, CMS has announced two regional anti-fraud demonstration projects; one for DME suppliers, the other for home health agencies. Under the DME demo, DME suppliers in South Florida and Los Angeles, CA will be required to re-register with the National Supplier Clearinghouse (NSC), those who fail to comply within thirty days of the notification letter will have their billing privileges revoked. Similarly, home health agencies in Houston, TX and Los Angeles, CA will have sixty days to recertify for

Medicare upon receipt of a notice by CMS. HHS' press release for the DME demo can be found at: <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2007pres/07/pr20070702a.html>; the press release for the home health demo is at: <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2007pres/07/pr20070717a.html>.

The next CMS ODF for Home Health, Hospice and DME is scheduled for August 29th at 2pm. The PMC will forward to you details on how to participate once they become available.