

Key Points for 2008 AAHomecare Washington Legislative Conference (Draft)

Suspend Round One of Competitive Bidding and Examine its Impact

Suspend implementation of round one of competitive bidding in order to examine the impact on providers, especially in view of concerns raised by the Robert Morris University economic study which predicts that the bidding program will reduce competition, lower quality of care, and increase costs in the long run.

The bidding program should allow any qualified provider to participate in Medicare as long as they agree to the competitively bid rates.

Additional legislative changes to the bidding program are necessary before a second round is implemented in view of the impact patients and providers.

Don't Weaken the Home Oxygen Therapy Benefit by Making More Cuts

Don't make any further cuts to reimbursement rates for home oxygen therapy. Cuts proposed by Congress last year must be viewed in light of their impact on patients.

There is a need to reform the oxygen reimbursement policy, which should center on the patients' needs, services associated with providing the therapy, and clinical considerations – rather than the equipment alone.

Preserve the First-Month Purchase Option for Power Wheelchairs

Preserve the beneficiary's ability to choose to purchase a power wheelchair during the first month of use and not impose a 13-month rental period on wheelchairs. Ask Congressmen Charlie Rangel and Pete Stark and Senators Max Baucus and Charles Grassley to preserve first-month option.

Urge Medicare to Improve Front-End Efforts to Curb Fraud and Abuse

The durable medical equipment industry continues to vigorously support efforts to prevent Medicare fraud and abuse which is theft of taxpayer dollars. CMS must improve its efforts to keep criminals out of Medicare at the front-end of the process rather than after the fraud has occurred. Efforts to prevent fraud should not penalize abiding providers.