

The Medicare Modernization Act (MMA) of 2003 requires CMS to make competitive bidding for DMEPOS a permanent part of Medicare. In order to obtain input and recommendations about the competitive bidding program the statute requires Medicare to establish and administer a Program Advisory and Oversight Committee (PAOC) whose role is to provide CMS with advice on the development and implementation of the DMEPOS Competitive Bidding Program.

The DMEPOS Competitive Bidding PAOC has met 3 times since the enactment of the MMA and has discussed a broad range of topics pertaining to program design and operation. During the course of these meetings, the PAOC has recognized that a major challenge of designing a successful competitive bidding program will be taking into account not only the generic issues associated with all categories of DMEPOS but with recognizing the unique issues associated with particular product categories. In order to gain a better understanding of the range of unique issues that need to be considered, several PAOC members recommended that CMS arrange for manufacturers/suppliers (or their representatives) of product categories to discuss these issues with the PAOC.

We agree with this request and hope to hold this type of panel at our next PAOC meeting. Currently, the next public advisory committee meeting is scheduled for September 26 – 27, 2005. A draft agenda can be found on CMS's website at <http://www.cms.hhs.gov/suppliers/dmepos/compbid/paoc.asp>. At this meeting, the PAOC is planning to hold 7 panels, each approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour in length. The session topics are as follows:

- Panel 1: Beneficiary Organizations
- Panel 2: Blood Glucose Systems
- Panel 3: Home Medical Equipment (hospital beds, walkers, etc...)
- Panel 4: Respiratory Equipment (INCLUDING OXYGEN)
- Panel 5: Rehabilitation Equipment and Assistive Technology
- Panel 6: Prosthetics and Orthotics
- Panel 7: Enteral Nutrition

We are contacting you to solicit your input regarding the appropriate composition of the panels. As there will be a limited amount of time for each panel, there will be a limited number of presenters for each panel. Therefore, we encourage you as association representatives of these product categories to collaborate with your fellow associations on recommendations for the panel composition as well as the presentation itself. This will ensure that each panel discussion can focus on the appropriate core set of issues and limit unnecessary duplication. Please submit joint recommendations where possible.

Panel recommendations should be submitted to Sean Dalenberg, at sean.dalenberg@cms.hhs.gov, by August 31st. The recommendation must include the name of the person recommended and their organization, the panel the person will represent, the reason for the recommendation, and contact information for the person recommended. Final selections will be made and announced on or about September 9th. Final presentation materials will be due to Sean Dalenberg at sean.dalenberg@cms.hhs.gov no later than 5:00 pm on September 19th. The presentation materials will be distributed to all PAOC members and will be posted on the CMS website.

Please understand that the time available for each panel is limited. We will determine the appropriate length of time for individual presentations, depending on the number of presenters selected.

Thank you for your cooperation with this effort. We believe that these stakeholder panels will provide invaluable information to the PAOC.