

Information You Need: New Medicare Equipment and Supplies Program In Your Community

If you help people with Original Medicare get certain durable medical equipment and supplies, such as oxygen, walkers, or wheelchairs, you should know about a Medicare program, called the Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS) competitive bidding program, that saves money for taxpayers and people with Medicare and may change the suppliers people with Medicare will need to use.

The first round of the program went into effect in nine areas of the country on January 1, 2011, reducing money spent for equipment included in the program by over 42 percent in its first year of operation while maintaining access to quality equipment and supplies. Now the program's benefits are coming to people with Original Medicare near you, and there is some important information you need to know. **Round 2 of the program is scheduled to begin on July 1, 2013, and expands it to 91 additional areas across the country.** These areas can be found in the fact sheet at <http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Outreach/Partnerships/Downloads/DMEPOSbeneFactSheetMarch2013.pdf>.

When the program starts, people with Original Medicare who live in or travel to one of these areas and need the items listed below **will likely need to get these items from contract suppliers** if they want Medicare to help pay, unless their current suppliers decide to become grandfathered suppliers (non-contract suppliers that choose to continue to provide certain rented medical equipment or oxygen under the terms of the program).

So people will need to find out which suppliers are Medicare contract suppliers to make sure Medicare can help pay for their medical equipment or supplies. You can find out if a supplier is a contract supplier for the program by visiting <http://www.medicare.gov/supplierdirectory/search.html> or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227).

The 8 product categories that are included in Round 2 of the program are:

1. Oxygen, oxygen equipment, and supplies;
2. Standard (power and manual) wheelchairs, scooters, and related accessories;
3. Enteral nutrients, equipment, and supplies;
4. Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) devices, Respiratory Assist Devices (RADs) and related supplies and accessories;
5. Hospital beds and related accessories;
6. Walkers and related accessories;
7. Support surfaces (Group 2 mattresses and overlays); and
8. Negative Pressure Wound Therapy pumps and related supplies and accessories.

In addition to the categories of items listed, **Medicare will be starting a national mail-order program for diabetic testing supplies** at the same time as Round 2. The national mail-order program will include all parts of the United States, including the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa. When the national mail-order program starts, people with Original Medicare will need to use a contract supplier for diabetic testing supplies delivered to their homes.

Starting May 13, 2013, **Medicare is mailing information to people with Medicare in the 91 Round 2 areas who use the items included in the program, in addition to those who use diabetic testing supplies across the country.** Approximately 5.7 million people with Medicare will get a letter and information. You can review the letters, introductory brochure, national mail-order program fact sheet and other program education materials by visiting http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Outreach/Partnerships/DMEPOS_Toolkit.html

If you help people with Original Medicare who live in or travel to one of the Round 2 areas and who need one of the items included in the program or who use diabetic testing supplies, please make this information available to them.