

# **DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT, PROSTHETICS, ORTHOTICS AND SUPPLIES (DMEPOS) ACCREDITATION FACT SHEET**

## ***Overview***

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued guidance regarding Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies (DMEPOS) furnished by certain health care professionals and persons. The Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 (MIPPA) required all DMEPOS suppliers to meet quality standards for Medicare accreditation by September 30, 2009. In addition, MIPPA stated that certain professionals and persons do not have to meet this deadline unless quality standards are developed specific to these professionals and persons.

## ***Background Information***

Section 302 of the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) added a new paragraph 1834(a)(20) to the Social Security Act (the Act). This paragraph required the Secretary to establish and implement quality standards for suppliers of DMEPOS. All suppliers that furnish such items or services set out at subparagraph 1834(a)(20)(D) as the Secretary determines appropriate must comply with the quality standards in order to receive Medicare Part B payments and to retain a supplier billing number. Pursuant to subparagraph 1834(a)(20)(D) of the Act, the covered items and services are defined in section 1834 (a) (13), section 1834 (h) (4) and section 1842 (s) (2) of the Act. The covered items include:

- DME
- Medical supplies;
- Home dialysis supplies and equipment;
- Therapeutic shoes;
- Parenteral and enteral nutrient, equipment and supplies;
- Transfusion medicine; and
- Prosthetic devices, prosthetics, and orthotics.

The quality standards are published on the CMS website at:

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/medicareprovidersupenroll>

## ***Guidance on the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008***

The MIPPA, section 154(b), added a new subparagraph (F). This subparagraph states that eligible professionals and other persons (defined below) are exempt from meeting the **September 30, 2009** accreditation deadline unless CMS determines that the quality standards are specifically designed to apply to such professionals and persons. CMS will work in collaboration with the medical and professional groups to develop specific quality standards. Those providers that were accredited prior to the enactment of MIPPA will not have to undergo a re-accreditation process.

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The eligible professionals (as defined in section 1848(k)(3)(B)) include the following practitioners:

- Physicians (as defined in section 1861(r) of the Act),
- Physical Therapists,
- Occupational Therapists,
- Qualified Speech-Language Pathologists,
- Physician Assistants,
- Nurse Practitioners,
- Clinical Nurse Specialists,
- Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists,
- Certified Nurse-Midwives,
- Clinical Social Workers,
- Clinical Psychologists,
- Registered Dietitians, and
- Nutritional professionals.

Additionally, section 154(b) of MIPPA allows the Secretary to specify “other persons” that are exempt from meeting the accreditation deadline unless CMS determines that the quality standards are specifically designed to apply to such other persons. At this time, “such other persons” are only defined as the following practitioners:

- Orthotists,
- Prosthetists,
- Opticians, and
- Audiologists.

MIPPA also states that CMS may exempt such professionals and persons from the quality standards based on their licensing, accreditation or other mandatory quality requirements that may apply. At the present, CMS is not exercising their statutory authority to exempt suppliers based on their licensing, accreditation or other mandatory quality requirements.

## ***Accreditation Deadlines for DMEPOS Suppliers***

Existing DMEPOS suppliers, with the exception of those eligible professionals and other persons mentioned above, that are enrolled in the Medicare program are required to obtain and submit proof of accreditation to the National Supplier Clearinghouse (NSC) by **September 30, 2009**. The NSC will revoke a DMEPOS supplier’s billing privileges on **October 1, 2009**.

The accreditation process may take up to 9 months to complete for an enrolled DMEPOS supplier that submits a complete application to the Accreditation Organizations (AOs) and has no deficiencies to correct post onsite-survey. Therefore, all enrolled DMEPOS suppliers, except those eligible professionals and other persons mentioned above, will need to submit a complete accreditation application to the accreditation organizations (AOs) by **January 31, 2009**. This is to ensure that the DMEPOS supplier will receive an accreditation decision (provided that they meet the all the accreditation requirements) by **September 30, 2009**.

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If an enrolled DMEPOS supplier does not submit a complete accreditation application to the AOs by **January 31, 2009**, CMS cannot ensure that the AOs will be able to accredit them by the **September 30, 2009** deadline.

Since March 1, 2008, new DMEPOS suppliers submitting an enrollment application to the NSC (excepting those eligible professionals and other persons mentioned above) must be accredited prior to submitting the application. The NSC will not approve any DMEPOS supplier's enrollment application if the enrollment package does not contain an approved accreditation upon receipt or in response to a developmental request. The NSC shall reject the enrollment application unless the DMEPOS supplier provides supporting documentation that demonstrates that the supplier has an approved accreditation.