

Arkansas Insurance Department

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NEWS RELEASE

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Advice Available to Navigate Changes to Medicare's Durable Medical Equipment Purchases

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS (July 2, 2013) — In May of this year, Medicare made some major changes to the purchase of Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies (DMEPOS). The Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP), a division of the Arkansas Insurance Department, is available to assist consumers affected by these recent changes to Medicare's Competitive Bidding process for these types of goods.

Effective July 1, 2013, all Medicare beneficiaries are affected by a switch to mail order providers for diabetic testing supplies. In addition, Medicare is requiring Original Medicare enrollees who live in or are visiting a competitive bidding area, and use certain listed products, to find a supplier who has participated in the bidding process and is a contract supplier.

Medicare beneficiaries in Central Arkansas and those in parts of Crittenden County are also subject to changes in the following seven categories:

1. Oxygen, oxygen equipment and supplies;
2. Enteral nutrients, equipment and supplies;
3. Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) devices and Respiratory Assist Devices (RADS) and related supplies and accessories;
4. Hospital beds and related accessories;

(more)

5. Support surfaces (mattresses and overlays);
6. Standard (power and manual) wheelchairs, scooters and related accessories; and
7. Negative pressure wound therapy pumps and related supplies and accessories.

“I know there is some confusion relating to this entire process,” said Melissa Simpson, SHIIP Manager. “SHIIP is here to help answer any questions Arkansans may have about finding a supplier.”

The Arkansas Insurance Department’s Senior Health Insurance Information Program helps Arkansans save money and make informed decisions about Medicare. It produces publications not only about Medicare, but also about policies such as Medicare Advantage and Medicare Part D. SHIIP assists with applications for Medicare subsidy programs like the Medicare Savings Program and Extra Help. Questions about finding a supplier under the competitive bidding process for durable medical equipment may be directed to a SHIIP counselor at 800-224-6330 or by emailing insurance.SHIIP@arkansas.gov.

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