

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Re-Use Program Follow-Up Information

What is a DME Re-Use Program?

- DME refers to any medical equipment used by an individual at home or in the community to live more independently, manage a condition and improve quality of life. Examples include wheelchairs, walkers, bed lifts and shower chairs.
- DME Re-Use programs retrieve donated equipment; sanitize and refurbish devices returning DME to peak performance; work with DME vendors to repair equipment if needed to ensure quality; and reassign DME to the best matched eligible individual.
- The inventory of re-used equipment is obtained through reclaiming Medicaid-purchased devices and donations.
- Medicaid pays for inventory tracking, recovery, refurbishing and re-assigning used equipment to eligible Medicaid recipients if available to meet their needs.

What is the Current Status of the DME Re-Use Program?

- The State of Alaska's Medicaid program does not have a DME Re-Use program. The purchase of used DME equipment with Medicaid funds is prohibited, even though the federal government allows such purchases.
- In FY14, Access Alaska established a pilot program to sanitize, refurbish and re-assign used DME. Access Alaska's experience can be used as a springboard for developing a DME Re-Use partnership with Medicaid to fund operational costs and expand the program.

What is the Potential Impact of a DME Re-Use Program?

- Many other states have implemented re-use systems with proven cost savings.
- Kansas shows a \$3.15 return on investment for every \$1 spent on the State's re-use program.
- In Oklahoma's first four months of service (April-July 2012), 74 devices were reassigned for a cost savings of \$31,692.

How Can You Help?

- Sponsor a bill to develop and implement a DME Re-Use program.
- Request the Department of Health & Social Services adopt Medicaid regulations that allow for establishing a DME Re-Use program.
- Contact Access Alaska, ATLA/Assistive Technology of Alaska and the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education to obtain information on Re-Use programs in other states.