



March 13, 2024

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
U.S. Senate  
322 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
U.S. Senate  
317 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
U.S. House of Representatives  
568 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2433 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Speaker Johnson, and Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the American Association for Homecare (AAHomecare), I am requesting prompt action to help durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics and supplies (DMEPOS) providers continue operations during the unprecedented disruption of claims and payment processes for Change Healthcare.

AAHomecare is the national association representing DMEPOS suppliers, manufacturers, and other stakeholders in the homecare/home medical equipment community. Our members manufacture, distribute and provide medically necessary DMEPOS items and services to patients in their homes.

The ongoing disruption stemming from the February cyberattack on Change Healthcare is critically impacting DMEPOS suppliers across the nation. These suppliers operate at low margins following more than two decades of Medicare reimbursement reductions for DMEPOS, and many operate with less than 30-45 days of cashflow available at any given time. The options for companies facing this situation include not paying bills (including payroll), taking on debt, limiting or pausing patient care, or ceasing operations permanently; all of these choices come with painful side-effects threatening their continued viability and impacting employees, patients, and caregivers.

While advanced payment relief recently offered for Medicare Part B will provide a measure of support, Part B payments represent approximately 30% of the average payer mix for DMEPOS suppliers. For some specialty practices, such as companies providing equipment and care to pediatric patients, the Medicare Part B component is negligible or non-existent.

We recommend three approaches to minimize impacts on patient access to DMEPOS products and services until payment processes are fully restored:

- 1) Require Medicare Advantage (Medicare Part C) payers to extend advance payments in a manner similar to the Medicare Part B advanced payments announced on March 9.
- 2) Require Medicaid fee-for-service payers and Medicaid managed care payers to make advanced payments in a manner similar to the Medicare Part B and our requested Part C payment mechanisms.
- 3) Develop a short-term loan program similar to the Payroll Protection Program instituted in 2020 to help businesses survive the loss of income during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency.

As we approach nearly three weeks of disruption to claims and payment process for healthcare providers and an uncertain timeline for full system restoration, healthcare providers are facing more than one month without income from significant payer cohorts. Expediting advanced payments across the full scope of Medicare Part B and C, as well as for Medicaid payers, is critically needed to prevent long-term damage to DMEPOS and physician cornerstones of the healthcare continuum.

On behalf of DMEPOS suppliers and the millions of Americans who depend on high-quality, home-based care, we ask that you advance these recommendations through legislative action and/or influence with the Department of Health and Human Services and other Federal policymakers.

The health and well-being of patients, suppliers, caregivers, and clinicians are at stake, and we must collectively work to mitigate the harm caused by this cyberattack. Thank you for your leadership in ensuring that patients have access to the care they need, even in the face of adversity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas Ryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Thomas" and last name "Ryan" clearly distinguishable.

Tom Ryan  
President & CEO  
American Association for Homecare

cc: The Honorable Xavier Becerra  
Secretary, Department of Health & Human Services

American Association for Homecare  
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