

Replacement and Continued Use of Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

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Introduction

Replacement and continued use of durable medical equipment (DME) are addressed by this guideline.

Health Equity Consideration

Health equity is the highest level of health for all individuals; health inequity is the avoidable difference in health status or distribution of health resources due to the social conditions in which individuals are born, grow, live, work, and age. Social determinants of health are the conditions in the environment that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality of life outcomes and risks. Examples include the following: safe housing, transportation, and neighborhoods; racism, discrimination, and violence; education, job opportunities, and income; access to nutritious foods and physical activity opportunities; access to clean air and water; and language and literacy skills.

Criteria

Continued Use of DME

Continued rental of DME after the initial rental period is indicated when the individual has been seen recently by their treating practitioner and has a documented care plan that includes the use of the device up to rental limit timeframes (please refer to individual policies for specific rental limit timeframes).

Replacement of DME

Replacement of DME is indicated when **all** of the following apply:

- The individual has been seen recently by their treating practitioner and has a documented care plan that includes the use of the device.
- There is clinical documentation of **any** of the following:
 - The individual is no longer able to use the device because their physical condition has changed.
 - The device has been lost or stolen.

- The device is broken, unable to be repaired, and no longer under warranty.

Additional Information:

- No further payment is made when an item is actively being rented. DME rental fees cover the cost of maintenance, repairs, replacements, supplies, and accessories.
- When equipment is purchased, if the expense for repairs exceeds the estimated expense of purchasing or renting another item due to medical need, no payment can be made for the amount in excess.
- Replacement or repair of an item due to misuse or abuse by the member or member's caregiver are non-covered.
- The Reasonable Useful Lifetime (RUL) of equipment is typically between three (3) to five (5) years (please refer to individual policies for details).

References

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3. Medicare Local Coverage Article (LCA): Standard Documentation Requirements for All Claims Submitted to DME MACs (A55426) <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/view/article.aspx?articleid=55426&ver=110&bc=0>
4. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Public Health Act - Title 42, Chapter IV, Subchapter B, Part 410, Subpart B, § 410.10 (42 CFR 410.10). 2024 ed1990. <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-42/chapter-IV/subchapter-B/part-410/subpart-B/section-410.10>
5. Medicare National Coverage Determination (NCD): Durable Medical Equipment Reference List (280.1) <https://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database/view/ncd.aspx?ncdid=190&ncdver=3&bc=0>
6. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Medicare Benefit Policy Manual, Chapter 15 - Covered Medical and Other Health Services, Section 110.2 - Repairs, Maintenance, Replacement, and Delivery (2015). <https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Guidance/Manuals/Downloads/bp102c15.pdf>
7. Teel J, Wang JY, Loschiavo M. Durable medical equipment: a streamlined approach. *Fam Pract Manag.* 2021;28(2):15-20.
8. White NT, Delitto A, Manal TJ, Miller S. The American Physical Therapy Association's top five choosing wisely recommendations. *Phys Ther.* 2015;95(1):9-24. doi:10.2522/ptj.20140287