



Raising the Bar: What You Need to Know about Program Accreditation

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This Session is being Recorded

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Credits

- **CEUs** are approved for .15 clock hours and are administered through Georgia Tech Professional Education
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Help us to improve

At the end of today's webinar, we ask that you please take a moment to complete our survey:

<https://www.research.net/s/PIOCwebinar>

We also have a separate three-question survey on interest in accreditation.

<https://www.research.net/s/pioccert>

This also will be posted at the Pass It On Center homepage at www.passitoncenter.org.

***Coming next month:
July 30, 2:00 p.m. EDT***

Education, Training and Certifications for AT Reuse Programs

**We've split this topic from accreditation.
Learn more about helpful certifications
and sources of training for specific needs.**

Remember the free resources at
<http://www.passitoncenter.org>

- **Locations Database – to profile your reuse program, or to find one**
- **Online Program Assessment Tool for the Indicators of Quality for AT Reuse**
- **Knowledge Base of articles and examples**
- **Five years of archived webinars**

Objectives

- ❑ **Identify one program that has accreditation, the type of accreditation and incentives for seeking accreditation.**
- ❑ **Describe types of accreditation available for reuse programs to consider, the costs, and what and who is involved in completing accreditation requirements.**
- ❑ **Identify specific steps to take to prepare for the accreditation process.**

Disclaimer!

- This webinar is a general introduction to the accreditation process.
- It is important to examine the options and have discussions with accrediting organizations before selecting an accrediting organization and embarking on the process.
- This should not be construed to be a recommendation of specific organizations, or a substitute for counsel about your specific program from an accrediting organization.

What is Accreditation?

- **Accreditation** is a process in which an independent evaluating organization certifies that a program (or business) meets certain quality standards.
 - ▣ Examples: Schools, hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, nursing homes, hospices, and durable medical equipment providers may be accredited.
- **The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)** authorizes certain organizations to oversee the accrediting of healthcare providers. Eleven organizations are authorized to grant accreditations that certify that the business, organization or provider meets the CMS quality standards for durable medical equipment (DME) providers and prosthetics, orthotics and supplies (referred to jointly as DMEPOS.)

Accreditation by Product or Services

- Companies or organizations must identify the category of products or services for which they seek accreditation. (More detail later)
- A program may seek accreditation in more than one product/service line.
- An organization may choose to be accredited by more than one organization.

Accreditation Results in Positive Change

- A recent study by the Commission for Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) found the following average changes from before the first survey compared to the latest survey:
 - ▣ Persons served annually: 26% increase
 - ▣ Annual budget: 37% increase
 - ▣ Conformance to quality standards: 37% increase

Credibility for Sustainability

- Accreditation is a third-party evaluation of conformance to standards.
- It is evidence to government agencies of commitment to quality.
- It signifies a commitment to accountability for funding sources, referral agencies and the community.
- It attests to responsible management.
- It is another tool for marketing the reuse program to consumers, referral sources and third-party funders.
- If used to qualify for Medicare billing, DME repair charges can contribute to operating revenue.

Required of DME Providers to Medicare

- **Accreditation has been mandatory for commercial Medicare Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies (DMEPOS) providers since 2009.** (Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003, or MMA)

What other benefits come with accreditation?

- Accrediting organizations maintain registries of the accredited providers on their websites.
- Some accrediting organizations offer special benefits:
 - ▣ Access to education and continuing education
 - ▣ Discounted commercial insurance
 - ▣ Media kits for use after becoming accredited

AT Reuse Programs and Accreditation

Accredited: Paraquad, Inc.

The Assistive Technology Center operates:

- ❖ An AT reuse program
- ❖ Accessible exercise program
- ❖ Wheelchair repair services

Paraquad, Inc., a St. Louis-based Center for Independent Living is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).



Paraquad was first accredited in 2010, and renewed its accreditation this year. It is accredited in the complex rehabilitation category.

Paraquad, Inc. Offers a Range of Services

26 Programs

- ❑ Accessible Housing (2)
- ❑ Assistive Technology Center (3)
- ❑ Deaf Way Interpreting and Community Services (4)
- ❑ Education Services (2)
- ❑ Employment (3)
- ❑ Independent Living (6)
- ❑ Personal Attendant Services (2)
- ❑ Public Policy and Advocacy (4)

About Paraquad

Founded in 1970, Paraquad is one of the oldest non-residential Centers for Independent Living.

In 2012, Paraquad provided nearly 7,500 services to more than 3,000 individuals.

Accreditation was the first step required to become a Medicare Provider.

Basic steps to becoming a Medicare provider:

Get program accredited

- This could take up to a year.

Get a National Provider Identifier

- <https://nppes.cms.hhs.gov/NPPES/>

Submit electronic application to appropriate Medicare Fee-for-Service Contractor

- http://www.cms.gov/Medicare/Provider-Enrollment-and-Certification/MedicareProviderSupEnroll/Downloads/contact_list.pdf

What Cannot Be Billed to Medicare



- Reuse programs **cannot become DMEPOS providers of new equipment.** Most of this is done through competitive bidding for contracts.
- **The sale of used devices is not billable.**

Approved Medicare Providers Can Bill for Repair Services and Parts for Beneficiaries

- A program can bill only repairs and parts as permitted in the Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS).
- Billing is by electronic filing only.
- Reimbursement rates are established by Medicare.

Examples of HCPCS codes for billing for repair time and materials:

- **E1340** Repair or nonroutine service for durable medical equipment requiring the skill of a technician, labor component, per 15 minutes
- **K0073** Caster pin lock, each
- **K0098** Drive belt for power wheelchair

Other Possible Revenue from Repairs

MEDICAID

- ❑ **Medicaid is a state-managed program with its own rules. Most followed Medicare in requiring accredited providers.**
- ❑ **Providers must be approved to bill services.**
- ❑ **It may be possible to contract or partner with Medicaid for repair services.**

PRIVATE INSURANCE

- ❑ **Private insurers have even more stringent rules for acceptance into provider networks.**
- ❑ **Many of these networks are closed to new providers.**
- ❑ **Check major local insurance companies for additional information.**

Provider Impact at Paraquod

As a Medicare provider, Paraquod can bill for repairs and parts.

This revenue makes a contribution to the Assistive Technology Center.

- **In 2012, the Assistive Technology Center received:**
 - **19% of its income from Medicare services**
 - **7% from Medicaid services (through a contract), for 26% of program Income from earned fees**



Just Starting the Accreditation Process: Goodwill Home Medical Equipment

- Goodwill Home Medical Equipment (GHME) of Southern New Jersey and Philadelphia has just initiated the process. It has chosen CHAP (Community Health Accreditation Program) as the accrediting organization for the medical equipment program, although some services at this and other Goodwills have CARF accreditation for Employment and Community Services.
- The self-study is due in July.
- GHME believes accreditation will bring recognition and assist in acquiring contracts.
- Geri LaPlaca may post to chat about the process.

The Accreditation Process

- Which organization is the best fit for the program's services?
- How much will it cost?
- What personnel and activities are involved?
- How long will it take?

Accrediting Organizations for DMEPOS

- ❑ Accreditation Commission for Healthcare Inc. (ACH); www.ach.org
- ❑ American Board for Certification in Orthotics and Prosthetics Inc. (ABCOP); www.abcop.org
- ❑ Board of Certification in Pedorthics; www.bocusa.org
- ❑ Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)
 - ❑ www.carf.org
- ❑ Community Health Accreditation Program (CHAP); www.chap.org
- ❑ Healthcare Quality Association on Accreditation (HQAA); www.hqaa.org
- ❑ The Joint Commission; www.jointcommission.org
- ❑ National Board of Accreditation for Orthotic Suppliers (NBAOS); www.nbaos.org
- ❑ National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP); www.nabp.net
- ❑ The Compliance Team Inc.; www.thecomplianceteam.org

See PIOC Knowledge Base for covered service lines.

Choosing an Accrediting Organization:

Does it fit your program activities?

- Choose an organization that **fits the activities of your program (service lines.)** Not all accrediting organizations cover all lines. Read carefully when choosing.
- The organizations on the previous slide all cover DME, but not necessarily all products. Some don't cover respiratory equipment. Some don't cover orthotics and prosthetics.
- Some organizations exist solely for the purpose of accreditation. Some offer accreditation as an ancillary benefit for members (e.g., the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy is an organization with many members that also engage in DMEPOS sales.)

Today's Presentation

- Based on the characteristics of *most* AT reuse programs, including CILs with multiple service lines, we have narrowed further discussion to two organizations that focus on accreditation and appear to be the best fit. (Do check out the entire list before making a decision, and explore resources on their websites.)
 - ▣ Community Health Accreditation Program (CHAP)
 - ▣ Commission for Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF)

Program Accreditation Areas

CHAP

- ❑ Health
- ❑ Hospice
- ❑ Home Medical Equipment
- ❑ Pharmacy
- ❑ Private Duty Nursing
- ❑ Public Health
- ❑ Community Nursing Centers
- ❑ Supplemental Staffing Services

CARF

- ❑ Aging Services/Community Care Access Centers (CCAC)
- ❑ Behavioral Health
- ❑ Business and Services Management Networks
- ❑ Child and Youth Services
- ❑ Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics and Supplies
- ❑ Employment & Community Services
- ❑ Medical Rehabilitation
- ❑ Opioid Treatment Programs
- ❑ Vision Rehabilitation Services

CARF and CHAP both cover in DMEPOS:

□ **Mobility Assistive Equipment**

- Canes and Crutches
- Patient Lifts
- Power Operated Vehicles – Scooters
- Seat Lift Mechanisms
- Walkers
- Wheelchairs – Complex Rehabilitative Manual
- Wheelchairs – Complex Rehabilitative Power
- Wheelchairs – Standard Manual
- Wheelchairs – Seating/Cushions

□ **Other**

- Diabetic Shoes/Inserts
- Orthoses
- Speech Generating Devices
- Commodes/Urinals/Bedpans
- Continuous Passive Motion Devices
- Hospital Beds – Electric and Manual
- Negative Pressure Wound Therapy Pumps and Supplies
- And more.....

Notable difference in DMEPOS product line coverage:

CHAP covers respiratory product lines:

- Clinical respiratory
- Sleep disorders
- Asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)

CARF does not cover respiratory devices.

What services are you providing and why seek accreditation?

- Keep in mind that the accreditation process is tailored to commercial providers.
- Discuss with the prospective accreditation resource what the appropriate category/product line fit is for your program.
 - ▣ It may be HME (CHAP) or DMEPOS (CARF).
 - ▣ It may be Employment and Community Services which includes Assistive Technology Supports and Services (CARF).
 - ▣ It may be something else.

Choosing an Accrediting Organization:

Is this the best process for you?

- The process is similar for most organizations, but they have different approaches.
 - Will you be more comfortable working with survey staff who are generalists (survey homecare, hospice, DME, rehab facilities, or will you be more comfortable with an organization with a group dedicated to DME?
 - How much help will you require in meeting the requirements for accreditation? Do you want the site visits to be consultative or just review for compliance?
 - Would you be comfortable with an online process with a coach, in lieu of site visits?

The Accreditation Process is Similar

- All organizations will evaluate the program against the standards specified by CMS, although each will have a manual that is slightly different.
- The process will consist of advance preparation, self-study, submission of information, site visit, evaluation of compliance with standards and accreditation decision.

Comparing two accreditation processes

CARF <http://www.carf.org>

1. Consult designated resource specialist for guidance. Get standards manual.
2. Conduct self evaluation.
3. Submit Intent to Survey (application) with full fee.
4. CARF selects survey team. (You can indicate some unacceptable dates.)
5. Survey team conducts unannounced site visit.
6. CARF renders accreditation decision and need for Quality Improvement Plan. (6-8 weeks after survey)
7. Program submits QIP (90 days)
8. Program submits Annual Conformance to Quality Report.

CHAP <http://chapinc.org>

1. Application with \$500 fee. (2 weeks)
2. Contract with identified fees for 3-year period. (2-3 weeks)
3. Conduct self-study through online portal. (3-6 months) Reviewed by CHAP. Visit 1-3 months after “ready”.
4. Unannounced site visit (2-5 days.) Recommendations submitted to CHAP.
5. Plan of Correction (POC) to program within 10 days after site visit.
6. Program submits POC.
7. Board of Review for accreditation (within 2-4 weeks of accepted POC.)
8. Accreditation notification (2-4 weeks.)

How long will initial accreditation take?

- CARF estimates that it will take a first-time applicant 9-12 months to prepare for the accreditation survey.
- CHAP suggests a similar timeframe.
- Expect the initial process to take a year.

How Much Accreditation Costs

- The cost of accreditation depends on:
 - ▣ Number of service lines (most reuse programs would be only one)
 - ▣ Number of locations (although a networked reuse program with a central hub could be defined as one by some accrediting organizations)
 - ▣ Amount of time required for site visits
 - ▣ Number of customers served (in some cases)
 - ▣ Resource materials for the process
 - ▣ Cost of annual accreditation fee

Estimates of Accreditation Costs

- CHAP estimate: Accreditation for a single location, single service (DMEPOS) program serving 150 or fewer unique customers in most recent 12 months at \$7,566, includes \$4,581 for three-year accreditation fee.
- CARF has an all-inclusive fee of \$2,950 per location (for one program area) that covers Intent to Survey, on-site survey and surveyor travel expenses, the survey report, and certificate if accreditation is granted.

Length of Accreditation

- CARF indicates that whether accreditation is granted for one year or three years depends on how closely the program conforms to standards.

Preparing for Accreditation

- Review the resources.
- Do some homework before the clock starts on the accreditation process.
- Talk with organizations about estimated costs.
- Choose an accrediting organization.



Support from Accrediting Organization

- After selecting an accrediting organization, the client gets access to written and human resources to support the process.
 - ▣ All organizations will offer the essential supporting education and materials to prepare for the self-study.
 - ▣ Someone will be assigned to shepherd you through the process.
 - ▣ All have experts in your product or service lines.
 - ▣ The goal is accreditation.

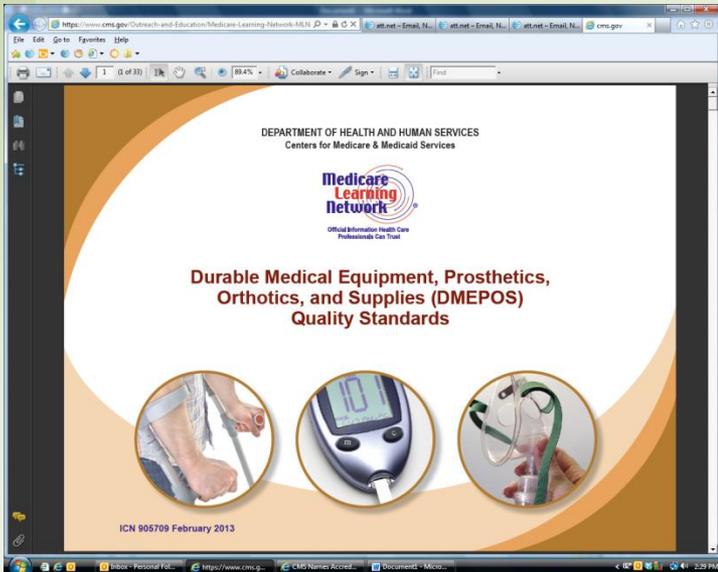
Download and Read the CMS Quality Standards for DME

June 7, 2013

CMS Revised DMEPOS Quality Standards Booklet

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has revised the Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies (DMEPOS) Quality Standards booklet (ICN 905709), and it is now available in downloadable format. This booklet provides education and quality standards for DMEPOS, with great tips throughout. Straightforward, easily understood.

Every accrediting organization develops a set of standards (similar but not identical to these) for use in the process. Check the organization website to acquire.



http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/DMEPOS_Qual_Stand_Booklet_ICN905709.pdf
or get it from PIOC Knowledge Base

Loaded with Resources

Explore resources before contracting

- Check out resources at each accreditation organization website. Some provide free information; others charge for resources.
- For example:
 - View the nine-minute [CARF Accreditation Process Overview presentation](#) (Flash, 9 minutes).
 - Attend a webinar from one or more of the organizations to learn more.

What's Covered in the Quality Standards?

- **Supplier Business Services Requirements**
 - Administration
 - Financial Management
 - Human Resource Management
 - Consumer Services
 - Performance Management
 - Product Safety
 - Information Management

What's Covered in the Quality Standards?

- **Product (Service)-Specific Service Standards**
 - Requirements
 - Intake and Assessment
 - Delivery and Setup
 - Training/Instruction for User and Caregiver
 - Follow-Up

What's Covered in the Quality Standards?

- **Specific Product-Related Services Standards (all may not apply program)**
 - ▣ Respiratory Equipment, Supplies and Services (includes CPAP, BiPAP, oxygen concentrators)
 - ▣ Manual Wheelchairs and Power Mobility Devices
 - ▣ Complex Rehabilitative Wheelchairs and Assistive Technology
 - ▣ Custom Fabricated and Custom Fitted Orthoses, Prosthetic Devices, Therapeutic Shoes and Inserts and their accessories and supplies

What does this mean?

Preparation is a big investment of time

- A thorough audit of program operations
- Written policies and procedures to cover all aspects of operations in the standards, (possibly supplemented by workflows for internal training purposes)
- Thorough training of staff to comply with the documented procedures
- Compliance with all applicable licensing, and federal, state and laws and regulations

Be prepared to provide:

- Proof of incorporation, licenses, etc.
- Policies and procedures manual for all phases of the program operations
- Documentation of staff orientation, training and credentials (or competency)
- Customer forms, documentation, records
- Customer training materials and records
- Evidence of quality and/or performance improvement initiatives

The self-study will emphasize:

- Whether policies and procedures are appropriate for each area
- The quality of the services provided
- Whether the program has adequate resources to provide services consistent with the stated policies and procedures
- Who is accountable for implementation of the policies and procedures
- Most of this information will be loaded to the accrediting organization website for review before the site visit.
- Documentation, Verification and Validation

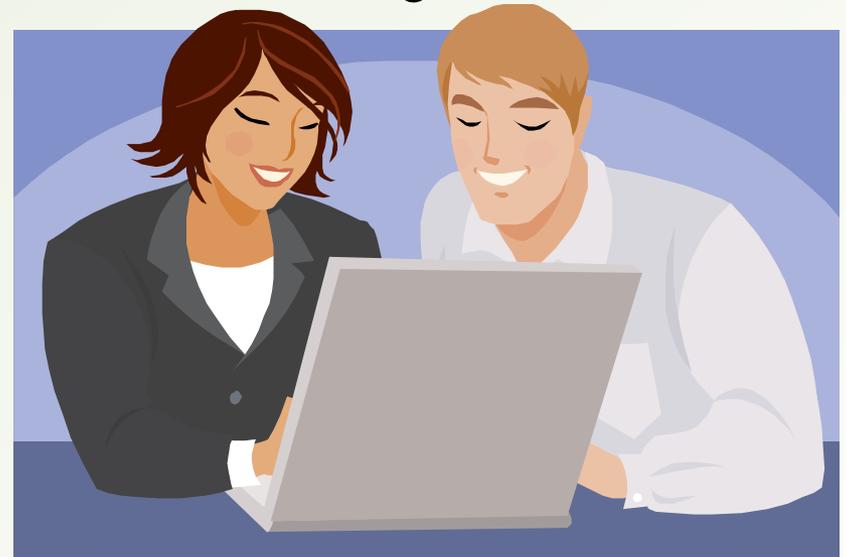
So, who is affected by the process?

EVERYBODY!

- Administrators
- Staff who sanitize and refurbish equipment
- Staff who interact with customers and provide matching services
- Delivery staff

It's a big time commitment.

- Lots of analysis, writing and training



Commercial DME providers often hire consultants for the paperwork

- If the written documentation doesn't exist, it's a huge undertaking to create it.
 - Commercial providers often hire consultants who have existing templates for compliant manuals. (Sorry, they won't fit reuse.)
- You may want to dedicate a staff person or hire a consultant to help develop consistent, professional documentation.

What to expect during site visits

- A person experienced in the service line (DME) will visit to determine compliance with standards.
 - ▣ Interviews: Staff and a limited number of customers will be interviewed.
 - ▣ Observation: Operations will be reviewed to see if they conform to the submitted documents.
 - ▣ Substantiation of findings.
 - ▣ Debriefing/exit conference with program administrators about findings.

What happens if issues are identified?

- A program does not have to meet every aspect of every standard to be accredited. It may be given guidance for improvement in specific areas, but accredited.
- The program is usually given a report of areas that need improvement and an opportunity to submit a plan for correction before accreditation is decided.

Professional Certifications That May Be Required for Accreditation

Assistive Technology Professional (ATP) – granted by Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA.) Requires two years field experience and passage of the exam.

Registered Rehabilitation Technology Supplier (RRTS) – granted by National Registry of Rehabilitation Technology Suppliers (NRRTS) based on employment in medical equipment field for at least one year and completion of a specified core curriculum.

More on Certifications next month!

What happens after accreditation?

- Program will need to keep current with all CMS standards for renewal when the initial accreditation (usually three years, though some organizations offer shorter periods) expires.
- Accreditation requires review (and payment) for each renewal.



Renewing Accreditation

Keep it
current!

- The program will be reviewed in the same rigorous manner for renewal of accreditation: review of compliance, unannounced site visit, etc.
- The difference should be that the compliance infrastructure and appropriate policies and procedures are in place and simply need to be maintained.

The renewal experience with CARF:

- Lindsey Kampwerth, Paraquad:
 - “We chose to include reuse with repair as we did the accreditation process. This really made us look at our processes for *both* repair and reuse.
 - You submit dates that they (CARF) cannot come in a 3-6 month period. Then they come on a surprise visit to spend a day with you. They can ask for forms, interviews, files, etc. They already have all of the information you submitted to their website, so they’re not getting acquainted with the program.
 - After they have assessed your program for the day, they will send recommendations. You submit a plan to remedy the recommendations.”

The renewal experience with CHAP:

- Melinda Bell, Christian's Home Medical Equipment, Forest Park, GA (a commercial provider), finds CHAP always helpful:
 - "I've been through three renewals for accreditation.
 - Each renewal experience was a little different because each time we had a different CHAP reviewer with a different personality. It's always a two-day visit. They arrive unannounced and review records and procedures. They even go out with technicians and delivery personnel [to observe delivery of equipment and the training provided to customers.]"

RESOURCES

- See *Pass It On Center Knowledge Base* for list of resources and links for accrediting organizations
- Websites of the accrediting organizations
- CMS DMEPOS Center:
<http://www.cms.gov/Center/Provider-Type/Durable-Medical-Equipment-DME-Center.html>
- More about Medicare
<http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNGenInfo/index.html?redirect=/mingeninfo>
http://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/downloads/DMEPOS_Qual_Stand_Booklet_ICN905709.pdf

Questions?

Help us to improve

**Please take a moment to complete our
survey of today's webinar:**

<https://www.research.net/s/PIOCwebinar>



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