Medicare DME “Competitive” Bidding Program, Round 2, Slated to Go
Live this Monday, July 1, 2013- What Next?
June 28, 2013

Despite considerable political pressure from Congress, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services’ (CMS) bidding program for durable medical equipment is slated to go live in 91 metropolitan areas this Monday, July 1, 2013.

On Capitol Hill, our legislative allies worked tirelessly to “fast track” H.R. 2375, the bill that would require a six month delay of the bid program pending an outside review and recommendation to Congress on how to fix the program. Unfortunately, the bill was not put on the House’s suspension calendar. In federal district court for the District of Columbia, late yesterday a federal judge denied the industry’s request for a temporary restraining order (TRO) that would have prevented CMS from implementing Round 2 pricing as scheduled on July 1 until CMS properly resolved problems around the issuance of Round 2 contracts to suppliers that do not meet state licensing requirements.

As the July 1 start date passes, we must increase our efforts to get consumers communicating directly to their Members of Congress. Congress is primarily concerned about beneficiaries and their access to quality services, and it is imperative that beneficiaries who are negatively impacted by the bidding program directly relay their concerns to their Senators and Representatives. You can assist them: give your consumers a few straightforward talking points, help them identify who their Senators and Representatives are and give them the phone numbers for the offices, the contact name for the health staffer. The communications needn’t be overly technical, they should simply raise serious concern about the bidding program and the consumer’s ability to access necessary DME items and services.

If you need help, there are lots of resources to provide you talking points and other assistance. Your state/regional association, the American Association for Homecare (www.aahomecare.org), VGM (www.vgm.com), the MED Group (www.med.com) and Invacare (www.invacare.com). Please contact Invacare’s Sr. Vice President for Government Relations at cbachenheimer@invacare.com for further assistance or information.