



*Caring that Feels Right at Home*  
**Press Release**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 26, 2010**

**CONTACTS:** Michael Reinemer, 703-535-1881, [michaelr@aahomecare.org](mailto:michaelr@aahomecare.org)  
Tilly Gambill, 703-535-1896, [tillyg@aahomecare.org](mailto:tillyg@aahomecare.org)

## **Home Medical Equipment Providers Recognize Americans with Disabilities Act 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Vow to Fight for Greater Access to Care**

ARLINGTON, VA., July 26, 2010 – Providers of home medical equipment and services, such as wheelchairs, oxygen therapy, and diabetic supplies, are recognizing the importance of the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) today. Home medical equipment and services help seniors and people with disabilities to remain independent and safe at home.

“We celebrate the opportunities and freedoms that the ADA has created for millions of Americans,” said Tyler J. Wilson, president of the American Association for Homecare, which represents providers of home medical equipment and services.

“The homecare community will fight to preserve access to medically required care and equipment that fosters this freedom and independence, especially in light of Medicare policies, such as the mislabeled ‘competitive’ bidding program, that are making it more difficult for people to receive the devices and services they need to continue to reside in their own homes.”

Dozens of patient advocacy organizations and more than 250 members of Congress oppose the badly designed bidding program for medical equipment and services since it will force thousands of home medical equipment businesses to close, reducing competition in the long term and reducing access to care and choice of medical equipment providers for the nation’s seniors and people living with disabilities. The homecare community endorses legislation to create an alternative payment policy, outlined in H.R. 3790, which would reduce Medicare spending but preserve the infrastructure for providing cost-effective durable medical equipment and services.

“I am worried about the impact of competitive bidding,” said Lucy Spruill, director of public policy and community relations for United Cerebral Palsy of Pittsburgh. Spruill, who has spina bifida, said, “It will reduce the number of home medical equipment providers, which is already insufficient to meet the demands.... It will increase the likelihood that patients will get the cheapest rather than most appropriate mobility device, which will lead to difficulty using the equipment, health problems, decreased activity, and safety issues.”

Currently, more than 54 million Americans have physical or mental impairments that substantially limit daily activities. They are protected under the ADA, and many receive equipment and care from the home medical equipment community. Appropriate medical equipment and related services

**American Association for Homecare**  
2011 Crystal Drive, Suite 725, Arlington, VA 22202  
703-836-6263 [www.aahomecare.org](http://www.aahomecare.org)

are essential for many who prefer to remain at home rather than in a more expensive nursing home or other institutional setting.

“Medicare patients, as well as American taxpayers, benefit from government strategies and policies that allow beneficiaries to live independently at home,” said Wilson.

To learn more about the ADA and its 20th anniversary celebrations, visit <http://adaanniversary.org/>. To find further information about the concerns of the homecare community, visit [www.aahomecare.org/athome](http://www.aahomecare.org/athome).

*The American Association for Homecare represents durable medical equipment providers, manufacturers, and other organizations in the homecare community. Members serve the medical needs of millions of Americans who require oxygen equipment and therapy, mobility assistive technologies, medical supplies, inhalation drug therapy, home infusion, and other medical equipment and services in their homes. The Association’s members operate more than 3,000 homecare locations in all 50 states. Visit [www.aahomecare.org](http://www.aahomecare.org).*