



Supporting Quality Health Care Services at Home

Special Alert

July 15, 2002

Senator Proposing to Enact Competitive Bidding – AAHomecare Urges Members to Take Action Now

We have picked up strong indications that Senator Graham (D-FL) intends to offer an amendment to establish a national competitive bidding program for durable medical equipment when the Senate considers Medicare legislation this week. It is absolutely essential that all HME providers pick up the phone and call their two Senators as soon as possible. Explain that a national competitive program is not practical, will drive thousands of small businesses from the marketplace, and will leave Medicare beneficiaries to the lowest bidder.

Complete competitive bidding information, including position papers, talking points, and letters, are available on AAHomecare's special competitive bidding section of our Web site at: <http://www.aahomecare.org/govrelations/competbidding.htm>. This section contains a wealth of information regarding this issue that could be helpful to you when talking to your elected officials.

As mentioned in the July 12 *Update* newsletter, AAHomecare, along with more than twenty trade and consumer organizations, has formed a coalition opposed to competitive bidding called **Coalition For Access to Medical Services, Equipment and Technology (CAMSET)**. The organization is comprised of groups that are concerned that the expansion of competitive bidding from two ongoing demonstration projects to a national policy is premature and threatens to undermine quality of care, restrict patients' choice of suppliers and service providers, stifle the development of new technology, and drive suppliers out of operation.

When talking with your Senator, do not hesitate to mention the support of such consumer organizations as United Cerebral Palsy Association, the National Spinal Cord Injury Association, and the American Association of People with Disabilities, all of which are part of CAMSET.

For more information on CAMSET, visit: www.protectaccess.org.

This is probably not the last time we will call on you to act this year, However it is a very, very critical time. We cannot afford to lose a vote in the United States Senate.

Find your Senator's contact information online at: <http://capitol.medgroup.com>