

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 8, 2024

The Honorable Chiquita Brooks-LaSure
Administrator
Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services
7500 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21244

Dear Administrator Brooks-LaSure:

We write to you today in follow-up from our June 2023 letter to again express our gratitude for the recent decision by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to cover seat elevation systems in Group 3 power wheelchairs under Medicare. While this decision represents a significant step forward in improving the quality of life for Medicare beneficiaries who rely on these complex rehabilitative technology (CRT) wheelchairs, we continue to remain concerned that CMS has not yet initiated a National Coverage Analysis (NCA) for standing systems in these wheelchairs.

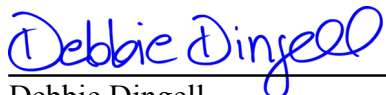
As you know, the NCA for standing systems was bifurcated from the original National Coverage Determination (NCD) Reconsideration Request on Seat Elevation and Standing Systems submitted to CMS in September 2020 by the Independence Through Enhancement of Medicare and Medicaid (ITEM) Coalition. Standing systems allow users to transition from seated to standing positions without the need to leave their wheelchairs, allowing independent performance of mobility related activities of daily living (MRADLs) and a host of medical benefits derived from bearing weight on an individual's body frame. These medical benefits include improved joint mobility and muscle tone; increased strength and bone density; enhanced cardiovascular and respiratory functions; and reductions in falls, neck and spine injuries, skin breakdowns, spasticity, and muscle contractures.

The absence of Medicare coverage for these systems leaves many beneficiaries without access to critical technology that can significantly improve their health outcomes and quality of life. While we commend the agency for addressing the seat elevation component of the original NCD Reconsideration Request, the omission of standing systems from this coverage determination falls short of fulfilling the comprehensive needs of certain patients. For individuals who spend large parts of their day in a seated position, the value of being able to stand, bear weight on the lower limbs, and allow gravity to aid in metabolic functions is well established in clinical literature. Given the substantial evidence supporting the medical necessity and benefits of standing systems, we urge CMS to promptly open the NCA and public comment period

regarding coverage of power standing systems. This action is crucial to ensure that Medicare beneficiaries who require these advanced wheelchair features are not left behind.

We value CMS's commitment to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities through considerate policymaking. The decision to open the NCA for standing systems in Group 3 power wheelchairs further reflects this commitment and will ensure equitable access to essential rehabilitative technology for all Medicare beneficiaries who need it. Thank you for addressing this crucial issue. We eagerly anticipate your positive response and prompt action in opening the NCA for standing systems in Group 3 power wheelchairs.

Sincerely,



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



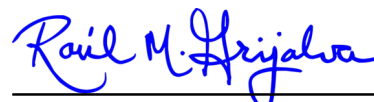
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Donald G. Davis
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



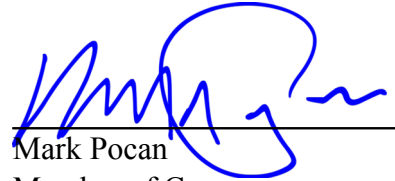
Dan Meuser
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



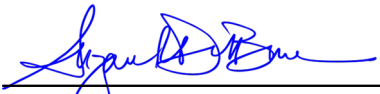
Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress



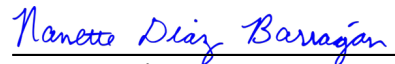
Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



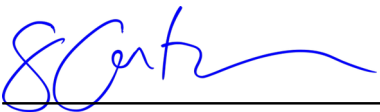
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



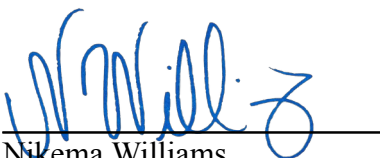
Nanette Diaz Barragan
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Glenn "GT" Thompson
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

