



HB22-1290



Changes to Medicaid for Wheelchair Repairs

"On Christmas Eve my tilt actuator broke and I knew I had an emergency. With it being the holidays, I figured it would be tough to get a response for a few days but I tried anyway. I called someone and continually let them know how urgent this was as I either had to be rolled around in bed all day or risk pressure sores by sitting up in my chair. I had no luck, but I figured I would be able to at least get an emergency response within a few days. I made many phone calls over the next few days and left several voicemails with management letting them know how urgent this was because I could get pressure sores. I never received a call back from anyone. No one showed any concern. Finally, I received a call from one of their technicians who said he was on his way if I still needed some help. The fact that this took 3 1/2 weeks is unacceptable!"

-Justin

"My tilt went out and no repair was available for weeks so my handiman fixed it piecing things together from my backup chair. I could have been left in bed for weeks, likely causing a pressure sore which would have cost more than \$500K for Medicaid to fix."

-Kevin

"After the airlines destroyed my power chair, it took three months to be replaced. I was fortunate enough to have an old power chair that I could use in the interim but there could be no adjustments to make it fit. While the new chair continued to be assembled, I had to make the choice to either be bedbound or to use a chair that lacked the basic trunk support and hip alignment to keep my skin healthy. I ended up with a sore that required surgery and kept me down an additional month. The service provider's unwillingness to work with the airline to make even minor repairs and adjustments to the old chair to keep me healthy while the new chair was being built was the direct cause of my skin breakdown and need for surgery i. And all medical bills were paid by my insurance when they could have been avoided altogether."

-Janette

^B
"We have 4 children who use DME. The huge issue is that for us to get an appointment for the company to come out we first must have a doctor script requesting the assessment, growth modification and/or repair. Then it is often up to 2 weeks from that when we can get an appointment. After they come out, it takes at least 2 months from then , often longer (we've been waiting on the bed repair for 3 months now) for them to even order the parts or equipment. And since the DME company won't take a chance on something not being covered they will not order until prior authorization is in for both insurance companies. Then we wait the month to 3 months for ordering when we finally get to make final appointment to receive repair or new equipment. It's a never ending time frame that is frustrating especially when your child out grows a wheelchair."

-April

"My joystick randomly turned off and in trying to get my chair repaired I was able to get a new joystick but they forgot the wire to attach it and I have yet to receive that wire [after 6 months]. Luckily I had a back up joystick and wire that work so I am okay-ish."

-Lyza

"In May of 2021 my wheelchair was damaged by an airline. The specific issue was damage to the grip coating on my power assist wheels, the wheels were fully functional. 3 weeks later when the parts arrived and the tech arrived at my home to replace the parts it was immediately clear that he did not know how to do repairs on the type of wheels I have. Over an hour later after the replacement of the grips we discover that the wheels were no longer functional and were in a persistent error code making them inoperable and the wheelchair non-functional, as a direct result of the "repairs". I was left with other, less safe, mobility aids for the next several days. The tech came out the following week and was unable to fix the wheels. All in all this ordeal took approximately 3 months, over half of that time I was relying on forearm crutches and the other half I was relying on power assist wheels that were not calibrated for my use, both of which resulted in numerous injuries, decreased mobility and independence, and limited my ability to work."

-Em



HB22-1290

Changes to Medicaid for Wheelchair Repairs

SUMMARY

This bill would make repairs to “complex rehabilitation technology” such as powered wheelchairs easier and faster for people who rely on this equipment by removing requirements for prior authorization of any repair and create benchmarks for service.

WHAT THIS BILL DOES

- This bill removes prior authorization requirements for any repair of “complex rehabilitation technology”.
- Uses a stakeholder process to create rules with requirements for completing repairs in a timely manner and quality of each repair (by October 1, 2023)
- Fines for violations delayed until three years after repair rule metrics are established (2026).
- Beginning December 1, 2024, the rate for labor cost reimbursements for clients in rural areas will be 25% higher.

TESTIMONIALS

"It generally takes at least two months to get repairs made - first schedule an appointment for a tech to do an evaluation of needed repairs(usually takes several days), next get approval from my primary insurance company (takes several weeks). Once approved, parts are ordered (can take a couple of weeks) and, finally, a tech comes out to do the needed repairs. This is the procedure if all goes well. Other times I've been denied service from my service provider because I acquired my primary chair from one of their competitors."

- Joe

"My lift needed a new battery and I could not even get someone to return calls or schedule someone to come work on it. Finally fixed it myself as I used to be a service tech."

-Mark

"Getting the company to come service the chair when it continued to have issues was a chore in and of itself. When someone finally would come, we were told parts needed to be ordered and to get the parts approved and replaced sometimes took weeks to do."

- Marlene

SUPPORTING

- AARP
- CoPIRG
- The Independence Center
- Colorado Cross-Disability Coalition
- Colorado Center on Law and Policy
- Denver Health

MONITORING

- Colorado Hospital Association

AMENDING

- Colorado Association of Medical Equipment Services (CAMES)
- NuMotion