



**ALERT ALERT ALERT ALERT ALERT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**TAKE ACTION ON  
FEBRUARY 19 AND 20**

The Department of Social Services (DSS) has proposed new regulations: “Requirements for Payment for Customized Wheelchairs.” These draft regulations restricting access to basic medical equipment **needed for independence** will be implemented as binding policies and procedures effective March 1, 2014, **before any public comment is received or considered**.

The draft regulations are seriously flawed and will make it extremely difficult to obtain Medicaid payment for motorized wheelchairs for severely disabled individuals, residing both in the community and in nursing homes. Below are a few of the key reasons why the regulations compromise the medical needs of persons with severe disabilities and must be stopped NOW:

1. The regulations impose conditions on eligibility for customized wheelchairs that are stricter than – and conflict with -- those under Connecticut’s medical necessity definition statute, which, among other things, requires coverage of services and items needed to achieve “***independent functioning***.” This will put recipients with serious, life threatening, medical conditions like Multiple Sclerosis and ALS at risk of being denied payment for customized wheelchairs necessary for the proper alignment and positioning of their bodies and for independent mobility.
2. The regulations make no provision for customized wheelchairs to be motorized, or for the assessment of recipients unable to use a manual wheelchair for their ability to safely and effectively use a motorized wheelchair. For nursing home residents who could safely use a motorized wheelchair, they will have to depend on nursing home personnel and caregivers for mobility, compromising the independence they are entitled to under state law.
3. The regulations make the application process unnecessarily burdensome. The medical experts who perform the assessments for a customized wheelchair are prohibited from contacting any durable medical equipment (DME) provider before completing the clinical assessment. The exchange of information between the experts and the technicians is essential because it will help select the most appropriate types of equipment and reduce delays in the provision of this needed equipment.

A hearing on these regulations is scheduled for March 21, 2014 at DSS central office, 25 Sigourney Street, Hartford (10 to 11AM). Although DSS plans to implement these highly problematic draft

regulations as binding policies and procedures even before then, on **March 1st**, it is not required to do so; it is making a **choice** of early implementation.

**The Governor can stop these harmful regulations from going into effect before the public comment process, which can allow these serious problems with the regulations to be aired and corrected, is completed.**

Please contact Governor Malloy and Office of Policy and Management Secretary Barnes, as well as the Commissioner of Social Services, Roderick Bremby, on **Wednesday and Thursday, February 19 and 20**, to express your concern and dismay, and to urge them to:

### **Stop These Harmful Wheelchair Regulations Now. Take Action:**

- ✓ CONTACT GOVERNOR DANNELMALLOY  
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**For more information, please contact:**

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