



CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES

VULNERABLE PEOPLE SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH APPROPRIATE MEDICAL CARE AND REHABILITATION TO PREVENT DISABILITY

A forum was held by disability advocates at a presentation by the National Medicare Advocate Alliance to discuss the Medicare Improvement Standard. Policy experts on Medicare made presentation which was followed by a question and answer session.

Summary

Medicare no longer covers home health care because of a chronic disorder that is stable. Medicare beneficiaries with long term debilitating conditions who need rehabilitation services are *denied* care based on the improvement standard. The improvement standard is used as shorthand for coverage denial issued on the grounds that the individual's condition is stable. This restrictive standard is in conflict with the Medicare act.

Disability Prevention Issue

The U.S. population is living longer with chronic conditions that affect vulnerable populations. The improvement standard is harmful to current and emerging vulnerable population, which include people living with chronic health conditions, people with disabilities, people with low incomes and of ethnic and minority status. A patient may need skilled services to prevent deterioration or to preserve current capabilities for a safe and effective maintenance program. If there is restriction of Medicare coverage of vulnerable population who are at risk of diminished health because they can not receive health care and rehabilitation services, these conditions may contribute to disability.

Activity

There is study of the implications of health care policies that lessen probability to health care services that may result in diminished health of people and contribute to disability.

Principle

All people in the U.S. should be provided with medical care and rehabilitation services that prevent potential diminished health that can contribute to disability.