

Bill of the Week

Durable Medical Equipment Pilot Program (HSB 759)

This bill sets up a pilot program for a non-profit organization to fix-up and renew used durable medical equipment to be given free of charge to Medicaid members.

☑ Key Points & Impacts

- Durable Medical Equipment (DME) is reusable medical equipment prescribed by a health care provider for home use. It can be rented or owned.
- DME includes things like wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, walkers, specialized beds, mobility aides, patient lifts, bedside commodes, braces, infusion pumps, and nebulizers.
- DME can be very expensive, making it very costly to the Medicaid program. Power wheelchairs can cost more than \$15,000, some ventilators are more than \$12,000, and a standard walker or bedside commode can range between \$85-115. (1)
- Many lowans with disabilities depend upon functioning durable medical equipment for activities of daily living.
- DME denials are the fourth most common reason for an MCO Medicaid appeal. (2)
- DME accounted for 9.8% of Iowa's Medicaid spending in fiscal year 2021. This is the most current data available. (3)
- This program would help stretch Medicaid dollars further by making sure Medicaid gets used equipment back once it is no longer needed – and reusing that equipment.

📣 Facts at a Glance

- The Iowa Department of Health & Human Services (Iowa HHS) is directed to contract with a non-profit organization to recondition and refurbish used durable medical equipment.
- Easterseals is the non-profit who asked for this bill. They have a program that does this work.
- Iowa HHS will develop a system to track all DME purchased in the program. They will also develop an informational campaign to let Medicaid members and their caregivers know that all DME is to be returned to the non-profit when it is no longer needed.
- The non-profit would then refurbish and renew that item and make it available free of charge to another Medicaid member.
- Iowa HHS is to report on the total number and type of DME purchased each year, and the total number and type of DME refurbished under this pilot each year.
- Iowa HHS is also to report on the total cost of the program.
- This pilot program ends on July 1, 2030 (unless the Legislature extends it before that time).
- There is no funding for this program in the bill. There is also no requirement for Iowa HHS to report on savings from reusing equipment.



About the Advocate

Easterseals has been around for nearly 100 years. Their mission is to provide hope to individuals and families by ensuring they have the right supports, at the right time, and in the right place.

