



Medicare Data Identifies 30% to 40% Nationwide Drop in CRT Providers

Reinforces Need for Federal Legislation to Protect Access for People with Disabilities

In order to identify the decline in Medicare providers supplying Complex Rehab Technology (CRT) products and supporting services, NCART obtained Medicare utilization information through the Freedom of Information Act for the years 2011 through 2014. The analysis of the data shows a **major drop** not only in the total number of CRT providers, but also in the number of physical locations throughout the country. These results underscore the fragile network of qualified CRT providers and the related negative consequences to access.

The significant drop of 30% to 40% reinforces the need for Congressional intervention to stop dangerous policies that undermine access for Medicare beneficiaries with disabilities who depend on these CRT products to live independent lives and to reduce their health care treatments and costs.

For this analysis, NCART focused on the top 5 CRT wheelchair codes. These were: (a) E1161 Tilt-In-Space Manual Wheelchair, (b) K0005 Ultralight Manual Wheelchair, (c) K0848 Group 3 Power Wheelchair with no power options, (d) K0856 Group 3 Power Wheelchair with single power option, and (e) K0861 Group 3 Power Wheelchair with multiple power options. The data obtained included: (a) the names of individual legal entities (companies) and (b) the addresses of all providing locations for those entities.

The following table summarizes the results of the analysis performed and the identified individual year and cumulative 3 year decreases in CRT companies and locations:

CRT Provider Decreases 2012 Through 2014						
Year	# of Companies	# of Locations	Company Decrease		Location Decrease	
In 2011	1,340	1,741	NA	NA	NA	NA
In 2012	1,212	1,622	128	10%	119	7%
In 2013	1,036	1,451	176	15%	171	11%
In 2014	804	1,219	232	22%	232	16%
Cumulative			536	40%	522	30%

As stated above, this new information identifies the significant decrease in the number of companies (40%) and locations (30%) providing CRT to Medicare beneficiaries and the small number of companies (only 804) still providing CRT at December 31, 2014. In light of the continued funding and operating challenges, it is predicted that the provider decline continued through 2015 and into 2016.

Request to Congress

This compelling data reinforces that Congress needs to pass H.R.3229/S.2196 before the end of 2016 to stop this negative trend and protect the already fragile access to CRT for Medicare beneficiaries with disabilities who depend on this specialized equipment and services to maximize their independence and minimize their health care costs.

The National Coalition for Assistive and Rehab Technology (NCART) works to ensure individuals with disabilities have adequate access to Complex Rehab Technology and the related supporting services.

For additional information visit www.ncart.us or contact info@ncart.us.