

PROSTHETICS SERVICE FOR VA BENEFICIARIES

I. **PURPOSE:** To establish the policy and procedures with respect to eligibility, prescription, acquisition and replacement of various types of prosthetics and sensory aids necessary in the treatment and rehabilitation of outpatients.

II. **POLICY:** The Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS) will review all requests for prosthetics items and/or appliances to assure that:

- A. The veteran is legally eligible and entitled to receive the requested item(s),
- B. The request has sufficient medical justification
- C. The item(s) have been prescribed by a specialized physician.

III. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**

A. The Chief PSAS is responsible for the administration of the Orthotic Laboratory, Home Improvement and Structural Alteration, and Automobile Adaptive Equipment Program.

B. The Chief PSAS is responsible for the overall administration of the Orthotics and Auto Adaptive Program.

C. Supervisor, Orthotic Laboratory assures the Service Chief of the safe and continuous operation of the Orthotic Laboratory.

D. Requesting Services will be responsible for providing or ensuring that proper evaluation and training of medical equipment is provided to patient and/or caregiver (See Attachment A).

E. Chief, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service (PM&RS) will be responsible for evaluating medical justification for major medical equipment.

IV. **PROCEDURE:**

A. Prosthetics appliances/equipments devices must be requested according to the specialists.

1. **Podiatrist or Foot Clinics** – Are the only persons who are authorized to request shoes.

2. **Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy** - Responsible to request and evaluate assistant devices (A D), walking devices, Home Improvement and Structural Alteration (HISA) PM&R are responsible for the evaluation thru the Wheelchair Clinics for Scooter, Special Wheelchairs.

3. **Pulmonary Service** – Responsible to request all home oxygen equipments.

4. **Blind Rehab Service** – Responsible to request all Blind assistant devices.
5. **Primary Physician** – Responsible to request items need for outpatient. Item such as: regular/standard wheelchairs, positional bed, etc.
6. **Spinal Cord Injury Service (SCI/D)** – Responsible to request all specialize items for SCI/D patients, evaluation thru Wheelchair Clinic and Wheelchair replacement.

B. Requests for Veterans inpatients should be received at Prosthetic Service at least 48 hours prior to patients discharge from the hospital.

C. Prosthetic appliances and services are for Veterans outpatients only.

D. Employees who are referred by Employee Health Physician for work related injuries.

V. EXCEPTIONS:

A. Artificial Limbs - Staff physicians will complete P S A S consults in CPRS Program, Amputee Clinics will made an appointment to the patients. The clinic team will evaluate the patient to determine the type of artificial limb necessary and prescribe accordingly.

B. Eyeglasses:

1. Staff physicians will complete P S A S consult, and refer patients to the Eye Clinic. If eyeglasses are prescribed, the patients will be referred to Prosthetic Service for eligibility determination and procurement, if eligible.

2. Veterans with a Service-Connected eye condition will be authorized two pairs of eyeglasses per year. Veterans who do not have a Service- Connected eye condition, but are otherwise eligible will be authorized one pair of eyeglasses per year. These limitations will be waived in the event of a change in prescription or if the loss or destruction of the eyeglasses is not the fault of the veteran.

VI. REFERENCE: VHA Handbook 1173.1, Eligibility Handbook

VII. RESCISSION: Center Memorandum No. 121-09-01, dated June 2009.

VIII. EXPIRATION DATE: January 2016

IX. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITIES: Chief, Prosthetics Service


JAPHET RIVERA
Acting Director

**ISSUANCE OF DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRING
SPECIAL INSTRUCTION/TRAINING**

1. BATHROOM SAFETY AIDS (Commodes, Grab Bars, Bath Benches, etc.) - CPRS consults, Prosthetic Requests, are referred to Prosthetic Service for eligibility determination and issuance. PSAS Warehouse staff will assemble.
2. BEDS, ELECTRIC — PM&R will verify legal eligibility and refer the VAF 10- 2431, Prosthetic Request, to the Major Medical Equipment Committee. Prosthetic staff will arrange for delivery and set up.
3. OVERBED TABLES - TRAINING SAME AS BEDS.
4. INFUSION PUMPS (FEEDING PUMPS) - Training on proper usage of this item will be done by Nursing Service. PM&R is responsible for issuing instructions on general maintenance.
5. ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL SYSTEMS - Patients will be trained on the use of the Environmental Control System by the Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Service prior to any equipment being ordered. Biomedical Engineering will provide one-on-one training in the home, on the use of the patient's own system when it is installed and will provide for regular maintenance and repairs of the units as necessary. Prosthetic Service will be responsible for the repair and replacement of parts as requested. When special devices such as nursing call systems, special bed controls for patients are required, (not ECU units) Prosthetic Service will consult with Biomedical Engineering to determine the appropriate type of electronic device which will serve the patient's needs. Biomedical will install the device and provide basic instructions.
6. LIFTS - Prosthetic Service will verify legal eligibility with the Major Medical Equipment Committee. PM&RS will provide clinical instructions on the proper use of lifts. Delivery personnel will provide instructions on preventive maintenance.
7. CPAP/BiPAP UNITS – Pulmonary Service will make the consults to Prosthetic Service. P S A S will purchase the equipments and contact Contract company for necessary arrangements to calibrate and set up equipment. Special instructions on the proper use will be provided by Pulmonary Section. Prosthetics Service will enter in a maintenance agreement with local vendor for a quarterly follow-up.
8. PORTABLE GENERATORS - This item will be provided as part of any approved item classified as life sustaining, i.e. ventilators, dialysis machine, CPAPS.
9. PULMO AID UNITS (POWER NEBULIZERS) - Respiratory Therapy will instruct patients on the use and care of these units. Pulmonary Section will verify that the units are operational prior to issue.
10. ORTHOTIC/PROSTHETIC APPLIANCES (artificial limbs, braces, corsets, etc.) —

Orthotic Laboratory staff will instruct patients in the use and care of all appliances provided through the Orthotics Laboratory and re-schedule patients as deemed necessary for follow up. Documentation will be made in the patient's record and/or on a progress note, which will be forwarded to the Medical Record Files room. PM&R will provide additional training on all orthotic/prosthetic appliances as deemed appropriate by the Amputee Clinic.

11. **SUCTION MACHINES** - Attending physician will insure that appropriate training is provided to the family in regard to suctioning of patient. If training has not been provided, the ward and/or physician will be contacted by PM&R.

12. **TENS (Transcutaneous Electronic Nerve Stimulator) UNITS** and similar units - Patients must be referred to Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service to be considered for issuance of this type of appliance. The Prosthetic Requests will be certified by the therapist providing the training before the equipment is provided.

13. **TRAPEZE** - Training on proper use of this item will be done by Nursing Service. PM&R will arrange for delivery and set up. Delivery personnel will provide instructions on general maintenance.

14. **VENTILATORS** - Respiratory Therapy will instruct the patients in the proper use and care of these units. PM&R will purchase the units and verify timely delivery. Contractor will service ventilator with quarterly follow up preventive maintenance and provide emergency service.

15. **WALKING AIDS (Canes, crutches, walkers, etc.)** — PSAS personnel staff will provide walking aids to eligible and entitled beneficiaries upon request. Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation will provide ambulation training upon consultation.

16. **WHEELCHAIRS (Manual & Electric)** - Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Service will instruct rehabilitation patients in transfers and maneuvering of wheelchairs and will provide assistance in evaluating patients to determine if they are safe in battery operated wheelchairs.

The Occupational Therapist assigned to the Special Wheelchair Clinic will provide detailed instructions on the handling of manual and battery operated wheelchairs. No battery operated wheelchair will be provided until the Occupational Therapist has provided proper instructions to the patient. The instructions will be noted in the patient's record and /or a copy of the training given will be forwarded to the patient's chart.