



California
Department of
Health Services

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Department of Health Services



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TO: All California Children Services (CCS) County Program Administrators, Medical Consultants, Independent County Chief/Supervising Therapists, Dependent County Lead Therapists, Medical Therapy Unit (MTU) Staff, Children's Medical Services (CMS) Regional Office Administrators, Medical Consultants and Therapy Consultants

SUBJECT: Addition to Durable Medical Equipment-Rehabilitation (DME-R) Guidelines (Pages 4-a & 4-b)

The DME-R Guidelines were revised in September 2003, with the distribution of CCS Numbered Letter 09-0703 and its attachments. The guidelines were designed in a manner that would allow later additions/subtractions/modifications to the document without having to re-issue the guidelines as a whole. The pages provided in this information notice are to be added into the DME-R guidelines and will continue to follow the policy as established in NL 09-0703.

Currently, the guidelines are set up in the following manner: Title page, table of contents, DME-R guideline general information (pages 1-4) and the DME-R guideline table (page 5-34). The additional pages will be set up in the following page numbering manner: page **4-a** will follow page **4**, page **4-b** will fit in between page **4-a** and page **5**.

These additional pages are designed to assist CCS therapists and others who recommend and authorize DME-R to understand changes in the Medi-Cal procedure manual. Medi-Cal has identified specific wheelchair accessory items that cannot be billed with a new wheelchair. These accessory items are considered part of a basic wheelchair and should come with a new wheelchair and are not separately billable.

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CMS will continue to provide updates whenever Medi-Cal makes changes to their processes or codes when those changes will have a direct effect on CCS authorization of DME-R items.

If you have any questions, please contact your CMS Regional Office Therapy Consultant.

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Criteria for Basic Wheelchair (Manual & Power)
-Applies to New Wheelchairs-

CCS has put together the following descriptions to assist county CCS programs to understand what is considered part of a basic wheelchair that should be included in the base price of the new wheelchair and should not be added on. These are the foundation components found in nearly all wheelchairs whether they are custom or not. The frame/base is the billable code (base price) for the new wheelchair.

Manual Wheelchair – includes:

- 1) Frame (base). (E1231-E1238)(E1161, K0001-K0007, K0009).
- 2) Detachable, non-adjustable armrest (K0015).
- 3) Back and seat upholstery (E0982 & E0981).
- 4) Swing-away, detachable footrests (K0052 or K0045) with: calf pad, standard size footplate, upper hanging bracket, lower extension tube, cam release and ratchet assembly hardware.
- 5) *Rear wheel assembly with either solid or pneumatic tires (K0069 or K0070), includes tubes, either molded rims or spokes, and wheel lock assembly.
- 6) *Front caster assembly with either solid (K0077), semi-pneumatic (K0072) or pneumatic tires (K0071) includes tubes.

Power Wheelchair – includes:

- 1) Frame (base)/motor/drive belt. (K0010, K0011, K0012, K0014)
- 2) Detachable, non-adjustable armrest (K0015).
- 3) Back and seat upholstery (E0982 & E0981).
- 4) Swing-away, detachable footrests (K0052 or K0045) with: calf pad, standard size footplate, upper hanging bracket, lower extension tube, cam release and ratchet assembly hardware.
- 5) *Rear wheel assembly (K0092 or K0096): includes rim, spokes/molded, tire, tube and wheel lock assembly.
- 6) *Front caster assembly with/without flat free inserts (K0099).
- 7) Anti-tipping device (E0971).
- 8) Battery Charger (E2366 or E2367).

* These items can be reversed on a wheelchair depending on type i.e. rear casters, front tires.

Parts of an item cannot be used to make a full item when there is a code for the complete assembly. Codes for parts of items are utilized when repairs, replacements or modifications are made to an existing wheelchair. New wheelchairs are coded with complete assemblies and those assemblies listed above are part of the basic wheelchair cost. An example would be code K0065, a semi-pneumatic caster tire. There is a code for a complete, front caster assembly with semi-pneumatic tire (K0072). Therefore, the K0065 code cannot be used with a new wheelchair, because the complete assembly, including the semi-pneumatic tire is considered part of a basic wheelchair.

Frame (Base): There are a number of different pediatric base types. The base type is what determines the reimbursement level for the basic wheelchair. A pediatric chair is a wheelchair that has a seat width of **15** inches or less.

Individual Items:

Wheels: A basic wheelchair always has wheel assembly and caster assembly included in the basic price of the new wheelchair. There are no upgraded versions of these basic items that are separately billable except flat free inserts for pneumatic tires on a power or manual wheelchair. The wheel/caster assemblies include tires, tubes, rims, spokes and hubs.

Arm Rests: The basic armrest assembly does not include features such as adjustable height (E0973 & K0020) or swing-away armrests that do not detach (K0108). These items, when medically necessary, can be billed for separately by the provider.

Seating Systems: Any type of seating system that is beyond the sling back/seat have separately billable codes unless otherwise specified in the codes.

Footrests: There are several common modifications to standard footrests that are utilized by CCS patients that have codes and are separately billable by the provider. An example would be solid footplate (may be swingaway) which would use the K0108 code. Most pediatric chairs must include growth (by CCS policy), so the K0053 code for elevating footrests is appropriate since the telescoping feature is fairly standard in growable footrests.

Battery Charger: All power wheelchairs include a battery charger in their base price. Batteries are separately reimbursable.

Anti-tipping Device: All power wheelchairs should have anti-tippers included in the basic wheelchair, therefore, providers may not bill separately for them.

These guidelines are designed to assist all level of therapist in the CCS program when obtaining specifications from DME providers so they do not include items that would, even when authorized by CCS, cause the claim to be denied at EDS. The DME provider must provide justification when substituting an item (listed code or unlisted) that is an add-on cost for an item that is considered part of the base cost of the standard wheelchair.