

PROSTHETICS & SENSORY AIDS SERVICE

Fall 2014 CVSO Training Conference
October 7, 2014



What Does Prosthetics Do?

- Aids for the Blind
- Ambulation and Mobility Aids
- Artificial Limbs (Prostheses)
- Automobile Adaptive Equipment
- Bathroom Safety Equipment
- Clothing Allowance Determinations
- Communication Devices
- Computers for the Blind and/or Disabled
- Durable/Home Medical Equipment (DME)
- Eyeglasses and Contact Lenses
- Hearing and speech Aids
- Home Improvement Structural Alterations (HISA) Program
- Home Oxygen Program
- Hospital Beds
- Items for Daily Living
- Major Medical Equipment and Supplies
- Ocular Prostheses and Cosmetic Restorations
- Orthotic Devices
- Shoes or Footwear
- Surgical Implants
- Wheelchair

Eligibility for Prosthetic Devices

- Basic eligibility for Prosthetic items is that the veteran is enrolled in the VA system, the provider requests an item and gives a proper medical justification for the item.
- Non-VA prescriptions can be accepted for patients that are service-connected (SC) for the condition requiring the item or are greater than 50% SC. However, a VA clinician will still need to enter the consult or referral to specialty clinic.
- Service-connection does not have a role in eligibility for an appliance except for certain programs.

What happens after a consult has been entered

- Prosthetic items require a prescription/consult from a VA provider
- Prescriptions must be specific (exact item, size, etc.)
- Consults that are incomplete, lack a size, compression or other specific item information cannot be processed and the patient will not receive any items.
- Prosthetics employees are not clinical staff and do not have the ability to make any determination as to a patient's equipment needs.

What happens after a consult has been entered

- Some items require consults to be written by the appropriate specialist (i.e. Podiatry, Respiratory, Audiology, Ophthalmology)
- Those patients requiring customized items or major medical equipment (electric mobility, stair glides, ramps, etc.) are referred to the appropriate specialty for evaluation of medical need
- Joint Commission requires that a qualified clinician provide and document education on any item issued. If education is not documented the patient will not receive the item.

Specialty Programs

- Amputee Clinic
- Auto Adaptive Equipment
- Clothing Allowance
- Home Improvement & Structural Alterations (HISA)
- Home Oxygen
- Major Medical Equipment Committee
- Non-VA Care Prescriptions
- Service Dogs

Amputee Clinic

- Clinic is held via telehealth with the Minneapolis Amputee Clinic Team the 2nd & 4th Thursday of each month
- Patients are seen for the initial prescription of a limb and check out of the limb once fabricated
- The prescription for the limb is written by a VHA Prosthetist (directive 1045 dated 12/30/13)
- If a patient has a limb that is not fitting well we will first attempt to have them seen by their local prosthetist for adjustments

Auto Adaptive Equipment

- AAE is a benefit administered by VHA and VBA for SC Veterans that permits them to receive a one time grant toward the purchase of a vehicle and reimbursement for adaptive equipment
- Eligibility for the AAE Program is determined by the VBA
- Eligibility:
 - SC for the loss, or loss of use of one or both feet or hands, or have service connected ankylosis of one or both knees or hips. Veterans with severe burns resulting in a rating of loss of use of their extremities.
 - SC for permanent impairment of vision of both eyes that have a central acuity of 20/200

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Auto Adaptive Equipment NSC Vehicle Modifications

- There is no funding available to assist in the purchase of a vehicle. The patient must own or purchase a vehicle which can be modified.
- For Access/Egress from the vehicle only
- Cannot be used to modify the driver's area or provide adaptive equipment used to operate the vehicle
- Requests are Reviewed by the Major Medical Equipment Committee

Clothing Allowance

- As of December 16, 2011, Veterans who meet eligibility criteria may be eligible to receive multiple clothing allowance benefits for the year starting on August 1, 2012
- Pay an annual clothing allowance to Veterans who has a service-connected disability or condition; or A disability compensable under 38 U.S.C. 1151; which
 - (a)(1) Veteran wears or uses certain prosthetic or orthopedic appliances which tend to wear or tear clothing (including a wheelchair) because of such disability and such disability is the loss or loss of use of a hand or foot
 - (a)(2) Because of such disability a prosthetic or orthopedic appliance is worn or used which tends to wear or tear the Veteran's clothing or that because of the use of a physician prescribed medication for a skin condition which is due to the service-connected disability irreparable damage is done to the Veteran's outergarments
- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §3.810(a)(1)
 - A Veteran who has a service-connected disability, or a disability compensable under 38 U.S.C. 1151 as if it were service connected, is entitled, upon application therefore, to an annual clothing allowance, which is payable in a lump sum as specified in CFR §3.810(a)(1)

Clothing Allowance

- **Eligibility determination:**
 - Veteran is service connected for the condition for which the appliance, device or medication was prescribed
 - Use of the appliance, device or skin medication is medically prescribed
 - In the case of a device, such device qualifies as a prosthetic or orthopedic appliance
 - The device or skin medication tends to wear out, tear, or cause irreparable damage to clothing
 - The Veteran actually uses the device or skin medication with sufficient consistency to wear out, tear, or cause irreparable damage to clothing
- Veteran uses more than one qualifying prosthetic or orthopedic appliance; medications for more than one skin condition; or an appliance and a medication that tends to wear, tear, or causes irreparable damage to the clothing or outer garment due to more than one appliance(s) or medication(s).
- Application for Clothing Allowance is due annually by August 1st. The application may be processed at any time during the year, but payments do not go out until September/October of the application year.
- Retroactive payments can only be considered for one year.

Home Improvement & Structural Alterations (HISA)

- Require a prescription from a VA clinician specifying what modifications are needed and medical justification
- HISA Modifications include:
 - Allowing entrance to or exit from their homes
 - Use of essential lavatory and sanitary facilities (e.g. roll in showers or walk in tubs)
 - Allowing accessibility to kitchen or bathroom sinks or counters (e.g. lowering counters/sinks)
 - Improving entrance paths or driveways in immediate area of the home to facilitate access to the home through construction of permanent ramping
 - Improving plumbing or electrical systems made necessary due to installation of home medical equipment
- HISA will **not** pay for:
 - Walkways to exterior buildings
 - Widening of driveways (in excess of a 7ft x 6ft area)
 - Spa, hot tub, or Jacuzzi
 - Exterior decking (in excess of 8ft x 8ft)
- The Veteran must obtain 3 bids for the modifications and submit all paperwork to Prosthetics for review by the HISA Committee
- No work should not be started before the patient receives the approval letter, payment for projects completed in advance of approval by the HISA Committee will likely not be paid

Home Oxygen – Travel

- Patients need to discuss their travel plans with the Home Oxygen Coordinator (RT), preferably 2 weeks in advance
- The Home Oxygen Vendor coordinates the delivery & set-up of oxygen needs while the patient is on travel
- If the patient will be gone for more than 90 days it will be considered a temporary relocation and they will need to get set-up with oxygen from the VA at their destination
- The number of paid travels for vacation not related to temporary relocation should be limited, a total of 30 days of travel with a maximum of two set-up charges is recommended.

Major Medical Equipment Committee

- Committee consists of a Physical Therapist, Physician, Social Worker, Engineer and Prosthetics Rep. Additional representation may be requested from specialty services when necessary
- Reviews requests for:
 - Electric Mobility Devices
 - Vehicle lifts
 - Ramps/Vertical Platform Lifts
 - Stair Glides
 - Specialty patient lifts (standing lift, ceiling lift, standing frame, etc.)
 - Unique or specialty equipment/appliances (Walk-Aide)
- Meeting are scheduled for the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month.

Non-VA Care Prescriptions

- All prosthetic equipment, appliances or devices require prior authorization from the Prosthetics Department
- Prescription from the Non-VA provider should be returned to the referring VA clinician for a consult to be entered
- The Prosthetics Department will coordinate the provision of the equipment, appliance or device
- Non-VA Care can pay for prosthetic equipment, appliances or devices issued in an urgent care situation for which they are covering the medical costs (i.e. crutches issued from an emergency department)

Guide and Service Dogs

- A guide dog is trained to assist the blind.
- A service dog is trained to help
 - Those with severe to profound hearing loss by alerting the individual to a variety of sounds
 - Those with a physical impairment that substantially limits mobility by assisting in the performance of a wide variety of tasks depending on need and training (e.g. opening doors, retrieving, etc.).
- Service dogs have not yet been approved by the VA for PTSD or other mental health conditions

Guide and Service Dogs

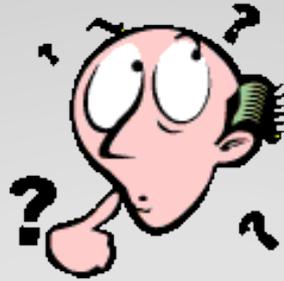
- The Veteran's VA medical team will perform a complete clinical evaluation to determine how best to assist the Veteran. Each guide and service dog request is reviewed and evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Requests are sent to VA Central Office for review and consideration of approval, only after VACO approval is granted can the dog be registered with the local VA.
- Veterans approved for guide or service dogs are referred to accredited agencies. Many of these organizations do not charge for the dog or the dog's training.
- VA will pay for veterinary care and the equipment (e.g. harness and/or backpack) required for optimal use of the dog. Veterinary care includes prescribed medications, office visits for medical procedures, and dental procedures where the dog is sedated (one sedated dental procedure will be covered annually). Vaccinations should be current when the dog is provided to the Veteran through an accredited agency. Subsequent vaccinations will be covered by VA. Prescribed food will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Veterinary care does not include over-the-counter medications, food, treats and nonsedated dental care. Flea and tick medications are considered over-the-counter and are the responsibility of the Veteran along with over-the-counter dental care products (bones, dental treats, etc.). Grooming, boarding and other routine expenses are not covered.

Who do I call?



- Chief of Prosthetics
 - Emily Dank ext. 3042
- Prosthetics Representative
 - Brian Thompson ext. 3044
 - HISA/MME, Auto Adaptive, Clothing allowance, Amputee Clinic
 - John LaChance ext. 2110
 - Orders over \$3,000
- Certified Orthotist
 - Vacant
 - Shoes, insert, bracing
- Supply Tech (Stock items)
 - Elizabeth Laney ext. 3043
- Purchasing Agents (Special order items)
 - Beth Bergseid ext. 3041
 - Aaron Goette ext. 3742

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