



Preserve Access to Habilitation in Any Health Reform Bill

Any version of health reform that emerges from Congress must preserve and protect access to habilitation services and devices so that individuals with injuries, illnesses, disabilities and chronic conditions can keep, learn, or improve skills and functioning for daily living.

The Habilitation Benefits (HAB) Coalition is comprised of forty-two (42) national nonprofit consumer and clinical organizations focused on appropriate access to—and coverage of—habilitative services and devices. We believe that any health reform must maintain access to the full continuum of habilitation care.

Habilitation services help a person with a disabling condition keep, learn, or improve skills and functioning for daily living. Examples of habilitation services and devices include:

- Habilitation therapy for a child not walking or talking at the expected age, including:
 - Physical and occupational therapy and speech-language pathology
 - Other habilitation therapies necessary to keep, learn or improve functioning
 - Behavioral health services and psycho-social services
 - Developmental pediatrics
 - Assistive devices and related therapies
- Similar services for adolescents and adults who require assistance in keeping or gaining skills never fully developed due to injury, illness or disability.

These services should be provided based on the individual's needs and prescribed in consultation with a physician as part of a plan of care. Habilitation services are essential to enable people with injuries, illnesses and disabilities to:

- Develop and improve language skills;
- Treat congenital disabilities and functional deficits to facilitate ambulation; and
- Avert more costly and intensive treatments to improve function over time.

While *rehabilitation* services and devices assist a person in regaining lost function due to injury or illness (e.g. stroke), *habilitation* services and devices assist a person in gaining skills and functions never acquired due to a congenital or disabling condition (e.g. cerebral palsy).

Coverage of habilitation services and devices is critical for individual and small group private health plans, Medicaid programs, and all other payers of health care services.

For more information, contact HAB Coalition at Steve Postal (steve.postal@powerslaw.com) or <https://habcoalition.wordpress.com/>.

Congressional Briefing Sponsoring and Endorsing Organizations

Sponsoring Organizations

American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
American Association on Health and Disability
American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association
American Occupational Therapy Association
American Physical Therapy Association
American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
American Music Therapy Association
Amputee Coalition
The Arc of the United States
ACCSES
Brain Injury Association of America
Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation
National Association for the Advancement of Orthotics and Prosthetics
National Coalition for Assistive and Rehab Technology
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
United Spinal Association

Endorsing Organizations

Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals	Family Voices
American Academy of Neurology	Hearing Loss Association of America
American Association of People with Disabilities	The Institute for Matching Person & Technology
American Cochlear Implant Alliance	Lakeshore Foundation
American Foundation for the Blind	The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis
American Heart Association / American Stroke Association	The Myositis Association
American Network of Community Options and Resources	National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors
American Spinal Injury Association	National Association for Rural Mental Health
Assistive Technology Industry Association	National Association of Social Workers
Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired	National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
Association of Academic Physiatrists	National Council on Independent Living
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs	National Disability Rights Network
Association of Rehabilitation Nurses	National Rehabilitation Association
Association of University Centers on Disabilities	Paralyzed Veterans of America
Autism Speaks	Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America
Caregiver Action Network	The Simon Foundation for Continence
Center for Medicare Advocacy	Spina Bifida Association
Clinician Task Force	TASH
Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund	Uniform Data System for Medical Rehabilitation
Easterseals	Unite 2 Fight Paralysis
Falling Forward Foundation	United Cerebral Palsy