

## PRESS RELEASE



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### **First National Medicaid Summit Big Success**

#### ***Provided Excellent Forum For Medicaid Advocacy and Networking***

Buffalo, New York – October 14, 2010 – The National Coalition for Assistive and Rehab Technology (NCART) held its first National Medicaid Summit in Nashville, Tennessee on October 6 and 7. Ninety-five people from across the country came together to learn and network about protecting coverage and payment for Complex Rehab Technology (CRT) under state Medicaid programs.

This was a first-time event held for CRT suppliers, manufacturers, state association directors, and other interested parties. The Summit was developed for this group around three objectives:

- To increase knowledge of Medicaid’s structure and regulations along with the related beneficiary and supplier rights and responsibilities.
- To provide information and tools for use in advocating on Medicaid matters and working with state agencies.
- To improve state-to-state communication and networking regarding Medicaid CRT issues and advocacy.

Don Clayback, NCART Executive Director, stated “Medicaid is a significant payer for Complex Rehab Technology. Unfortunately given the financial challenges states are facing, there are increasing proposals and activities to reduce coverage and payment. With this in mind we felt the need to bring people together for a National Medicaid Summit.”

Speakers at the Summit consisted of legal experts and others with significant experience and expertise in Medicaid coverage of durable medical equipment and Complex Rehab Technology. These included Lewis Golinker, Esq., Assistive Technology Law Center; Carla Hogan, Esq., Tuczinski, Cavalier, Gilchrist & Collura; Jeff Baird, Esq., Brown & Fortunato; Marge Gustas, AT Advocacy Project, Neighborhood Legal Services; Rita Hostak, Vice President of Government Relations for Sunrise Medical; Doug Westerdahl, NCART Medicaid Committee Chair; Carol Napierski, Executive Director of the New York Medical Equipment Providers association; Karyn Estrella, Executive Director of the New England Medical Equipment Dealers association; Kam Yurichich, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Medical Equipment Suppliers association; and Simon Margolis, Executive Director of the National Registry of Rehab Technology Suppliers. In addition representatives from CRT suppliers in other states shared their case studies.

Gary Gilberti, NCART President, said “While there are differences from state to state, there also is a great deal of commonality in terms of coverage and payment issues. That came out in the Summit. As CRT suppliers and manufacturers we play a role in advocating for our customers and need to be fully informed as to advocacy resources and strategies. Through education and collaboration we can better help protect access for our customers who have disabilities and need these products and services.”

The Summit consisted of 14 informative sessions developed to enable stakeholders to protect and improve Medicaid coverage and funding for CRT. These included “Medicaid Regulations & Advocacy”, “Supplier Responsibilities and Rights”, “Medicaid & Managed Care”, “State of the States Report”, “Developing Your State Relationship”, and “Medicaid Case Studies”. Moving ahead, attendees were encouraged to take advantage of the resources available in the Medicaid area of NCART’s website at [www.ncart.us](http://www.ncart.us) NCART has created a dedicated area to provide educational tools, case studies, a Medicaid News section, and a Medicaid Discussion Forum. All designed to assist in advocating for the appropriate coverage and payment of CRT.

NCART’s Medicaid Committee was pleased with attendee comments and evaluations. The post-meeting evaluations indicated a very high level of benefit from attendance. Comments included:

- “The quality of information was of most value. The quality of the attendees was excellent as well as the networking opportunities.”
- “All of the information presented is very valuable. I will be able to refer back to the information for guidance and direction for future issues.”
- “Great resources to take back to the real world.”

Doug Westerdahl, Medicaid Committee Chair, commented “We were very pleased with the attendance and feedback from this first-ever conference. There was some great information shared and people went back home with new ideas and tools. Based on the attendee requests we are planning on making this an annual event. We’ll build on this and continue to serve as a resource for protecting and improving coverage for Complex Rehab Technology.”

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About NCART- the National Coalition for Assistive and Rehab Technology (NCART) is an organization of providers and manufacturers that supply products and services used by individuals with complex disabilities and medical conditions. NCART promotes policies, regulations, and legislation to ensure individuals with complex disabilities and medical conditions have appropriate access to the necessary assistive equipment and services. Visit [www.ncart.us](http://www.ncart.us)