

Why Every Chiropractor Should Be a DME (Durable Medical Equipment) Supplier

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Wednesday, 29 August 2012 22:00

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fter 34 years of private chiropractic practice, I have found that some fundamental keys to practice security, financial security, and peace of mind lie in these simple facts.



First, as a chiropractor I must be able to get positive results for my patients concerning both their goals and mine. The patients must feel that I am there “for them” and that their goals are the most important in our relationship.

Second, I need accurate information in order to be able to work and perform efficiently. Accurate information allows me to achieve clinical results and to develop passion, enthusiasm, and satisfaction in excellent clinical performance. It has been my experience that one of the side effects of this is becoming financially successful and stable. For me this helps to achieve peace of mind in my “money” life and my chiropractic practice.

A number of years ago, especially after additional seminars in orthopedics, I began using lumbar braces and cervical collars. I also remember years ago using the at-home over-the-door cervical water bag traction devices. I would try anything reasonable to get better patient care outcomes. All of these things helped but there was very little financial profit in using them.

But today net income from such equipment is very good. Also, at this time the financial as well as the clinical improvement in Medicare, especially in providing DME supplies, such as back braces or at home traction devices, is excellent.

For years I have been providing DME supplies with great patient results and satisfaction. After sharing what I was doing with some close associates and friends, they started enjoying the benefits. Once they found out the “secrets” of this undiscovered opportunity that is “naturally right” in delivering chiropractic care, their practices became better.

The most common question I get from chiropractors is, “How does Durable Medical Equipment (DME) fit into the clinical picture for a chiropractor? Why should I even consider DME in my practice?”

My answer is always the same. Consider this: As a chiropractor who is certified as a supplier of Durable Medical Equipment (DME) under Medicare, you are certified to be able to be paid by Medicare at a strong net financial gain. The reimbursement levels are very good at this time. How would an additional \$5,000 in your pocket or more affect your lifestyle? Did you know that your patients are receiving these supplies from other sources already? Medical doctors, physical therapists, and supply stores have been in this side of the health care business for a long time. You are letting business that is sitting on the table in front of you just go to other sources.

Now consider that durable medical equipment includes strong clinical items that greatly help your patients live healthier lives. Consider that you may be insufficiently treating your patients if you do not incorporate, when appropriate, durable medical supplies in your treatment plans.

Utilizing durable medical equipment helps a chiropractor achieve two very important goals. First, we achieve results in patient care and second, we capture a sound financial compensation stream for the practice. Let’s be honest; without both why are we practicing chiropractic care anyway?

The next question I hear all the time is, “What are some durable medical items that I, as a chiropractor, could consider as useful in my chiropractic practice for my chiropractic patients?”

The most common durable medical items used by chiropractors and other physicians are lumbar braces, cervical traction devices, and tens units. Besides these, there are many other categories and items that are considered DME supplies. The key is to use durable medical equipment that is approved and certified by the proper Medicare agency. You must use approved items for approved uses.

The next most common question is, “How do I get certified as a DME Provider/supplier?” First, anyone can contact the DME department of Medicare and try to do all the forms by themselves. This may prove to be a difficult thing to do as the forms can be very confusing. Submitted improperly, the difficulties can be overwhelming. Consultants, such as me, can be very helpful at this point.

The next strategy is to hire a consultant to help with the process. Be sure to use reliable people or companies and make sure that your needs are met so you can accomplish your goals with the best integrity possible.

Every day I have chiropractors asking for help with their DME situations. Many got their DME Medicare certification by themselves or from other companies. Now they are confused over some issue and need help with something their previous consultant did not resolve.

For example, the chiropractor may not know how to bill, or how to document, or how to protect themselves when there is an audit from Medicare or when another agency investigates, and they

may not know how to solve the many little problems that show up along the way. Again, a consultant who has experience in this area can make the difference between success and failure as a DME provider.

Being a DME provider/supplier is a wonderful addition to any chiropractic practice in this day of diminishing returns and increasing government regulations. I do not know of any other addition to a chiropractic practice in this day and age that has the benefits and safety that being a DME provider/supplier has to offer. Be not afraid! Help yourself and your patients. Become a DME provider.

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