



PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Theresa Morgan
Theresa.Morgan@ppsv.com
202-349-4243

Coalition Supports Direction of IOM to Ensure Coverage of Habilitation Services and Devices in Essential Health Benefits Package under Health Care Reform

Washington, DC – October 7, 2011- The Habilitation Benefits Coalition (“HAB Coalition”) announced support for the direction taken by the Institute of Medicine (IOM) in its report, “*Essential Health Benefits: Balancing Coverage and Cost*” released today. The Coalition praised the IOM for explicitly stating that the Secretary should take the typical small employer plan and add benefits mandated in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, specifically habilitation services and devices. The ACA requires all health plans within the new health insurance exchanges to cover at least ten categories of benefits, including “rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices.” The Coalition of disability-related organizations pledged to work with the HHS Secretary as the Department seeks input from the public prior to publication of a proposed rule on essential benefits.

The HAB Coalition believes that rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices should be provided under private insurance to address functional deficits in patients regardless of the person’s condition or diagnosis. Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices typically include physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology services as well as orthoses and other services and devices related to habilitation care. *Habilitation* services and devices help a person *attain* skills or functions that have not been achieved due to congenital or developmental disability, in contrast to *rehabilitation* services and devices, which help a person *regain* functions lost or impaired due to illness or injury.

Habilitation Benefits Coalition: Participating Organizations

Steering Committee Members:

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association
American Network of Community Options and Resources
American Therapeutic Recreation Association
Easter Seals

HAB Coalition Members:

ACCSES
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of People with Disabilities
American Association on Health and Disability
American Heart Association/American Stroke Association
American Music Therapy Association
Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Autism Speaks
Easter Seals
Family Voices
Hearing Loss Association of America
March of Dimes
National Association of Children's Hospitals
National Association of Social Workers
National Down Syndrome Society
TASH
The Arc of the United States
United Cerebral Palsy