

Date: March 17, 2021

From: Acting Under Secretary for Health (10)

Subj: Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS) Update

To: Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) Directors (15/1-23)
Chief Medical Officers (CMO)

Thru: Assistant Under Secretary for Health for Operations (15)

1. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has promulgated regulations found at 38 Code of Federal Regulations §§ 17.3200-17.3250, effective February 26, 2021, that establish and clarify eligibility for prosthetic and rehabilitative items and services available to Veterans. This is the primary authority under which Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS) will continue to purchase and issue these items and services, but there are key changes that both PSAS and clinical staff must know to ensure that Veterans continue to receive needed items and services. The regulations supersede any policy guidance issued prior to February 26, 2021, that is not consistent with the regulations.

2. The Veteran and prescribing clinician will continue to jointly decide which prosthetic equipment will best meet the Veteran's treatment or rehabilitation needs. While the items VA currently provides to Veterans will not significantly change, the rule enables VA to identify current best practices to serve as the standard for Veterans.

3. The regulation establishes 15 defined categories of prosthetic and rehabilitative items and services that include: adaptive household items, adaptive recreation equipment, cognitive devices, communication devices, home exercise equipment, home medical equipment, home respiratory equipment, implants, mobility aids, orthotic devices, prosthetic devices, specialized clothing made necessary by the wearing of a prosthetic item, repairs, replacement items. The regulation also addresses training and fitting for items issued under this authority.

4. Consistent with the regulation, prescriptions for items and services must be submitted for each item and service, and serve as a direct and active component of the treatment or rehabilitation of the condition for which it is prescribed, consistent with the Veteran's rehabilitation goals. PSAS is not authorized to purchase prescribed items or services for Veterans that do not meet this clinical appropriateness standard.

5. VA medical facility clinical and PSAS staff must partner and communicate to ensure that Veterans continue to receive high-quality items and services in support of Veteran's rehabilitation goals and treatment plans. If a prescription for an item or service does not indicate clinical appropriateness, PSAS and the clinician must work together to correct individual prescriptions and adopt standards that allow for efficient prescribing practices.

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6. Should you have any questions concerning this memorandum, please contact Penny Nechanicky, Executive Director for Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service (12RPS7), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20420; (202) 461-0337. (This is not a toll-free number.) VHA12RPS7PSASAdmin@va.gov.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Stone', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard A. Stone, M.D.