

IG Report Slaps Medicare For Not Recouping More Overpayment For Equipment

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Medicare has made nearly \$70 million in overpayments to suppliers of consumers' medical equipment, and more than half of that money is unlikely to be recovered, according to a new report from the Department of Health and Human Services Inspector General.

Since 2009, Medicare has required suppliers of such durable medical equipment, which includes wheelchairs, walkers and home oxygen equipment and supplies, to obtain at least \$50,000 in surety bond coverage per location. But the report also found that as of October 2011, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services had "inaccurate and incomplete" bond information for many suppliers. As of July 2012, just \$263,000 out of the \$50 million backed by surety bonds has been recovered.

The report also found that many overpayments to durable medical equipment suppliers exceeded \$50,000. Because of that limit, much of the \$42 million of the overpayments will not be recovered, according to the report.

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