

Dear Senator (or Representative),

My radio and TV are running expensive ads asking that Medicaid be expanded. What about Medicare? I am writing for those forgotten people who pay premiums every month and who contributed their entire working lives to Medicare. Because of cuts to durable medical equipment suppliers, some essential services are either very difficult, or impossible to get.

People with lung disease often need more oxygen than portable machines or portable gas cylinders can supply, so that they can lead a semblance of normal lives. The solution to this problem is simple: Liquid oxygen. It is often known as LOX (liquid oxygen).

Because of Medicare cuts, suppliers are very reluctant to supply it. Even when suppliers go to heroic lengths to obtain it, we know that if we survive the contract length, the next supplier may deny it regardless of the doctor's Rx.

Competitive bidding has made the problem worse as suppliers naturally want to supply equipment and services that they can make a return on. I certainly don't blame them for this as I don't want suppliers going out of business. However, I do not believe the low bidder should be able to pick and choose what he supplies; it should be all or nothing.

How big a problem is this? Well, it is not only a few sick malcontents. According to the American Lung Association: COPD is the third leading cause of death in the United States. More than 11 million people have been diagnosed with COPD, but millions more may have the disease without even knowing it. (Nov 1, 2016)

Add all these people suffering from other lung diseases e.g. interstitial lung diseases and you see that huge numbers of people are impacted by Medicare cuts. Most of these patients are older women according to this study: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4364693/> , which also posits that the reduction in people receiving oxygen, since 2008, is due to cuts in Medicare.

In conclusion, I am asking that you please,

- Make the supply of liquid oxygen an economic proposition for durable medical equipment (DME) suppliers by restoring any cuts made in Medicare.
- Insist that DME suppliers supply any services and devices authorized under Medicare, not just the most profitable.

Yours sincerely

*[Your Name]*

*[Your Address]*

*[City, State ZIP]*

*[Your Email]*