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VA publishes final regulation to improve delivery of prosthetic and sensory aids services

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) recently published a [final rule](#) to establish and clarify eligibility for prosthetic and rehabilitative items and services available to Veterans.

This establishes for the first time, the nationwide categories of prosthetic and orthotic services, sensory aids and medical devices VA is authorized to provide to Veterans as part of their active treatment and ongoing rehabilitation.

Previously, these categories varied across VA medical centers.

“The rule establishes a uniform approach for VA to deliver prosthetic items and services to Veterans,” said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. “It ensures Veterans receive the same standard of service for the rehabilitative devices they need to live independently, no matter which medical center they walk into.”

Categories of prosthetic and rehabilitation items and services defined in the rule 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 limbs and replacement items.

The rule reflects VA’s Veteran-centered approach to health care, by empowering the Veteran and clinician to jointly decide which prosthetic equipment will best meet the Veteran’s treatment or rehabilitation needs, based on clinical need and Veteran input. 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 all Veterans who receive their care through VA.

As the largest and most comprehensive provider of prosthetic devices and sensory aids in the country, VA provides a full range of equipment and services to Veterans, including artificial limbs and bracing, wheeled mobility and seating systems, implants and devices surgically placed in the Veteran (e.g., hips and pacemakers), and home respiratory care. In fiscal year 2020, VA provided approximately 21 million prosthetic devices/items to Veterans, serving more than 52% of all Veterans treated in VA.

For more information, visit VA’s [Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Services webpage](#).

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