

North Carolina Association for Medical Equipment Services



Preserving access to quality care
PRESS RELEASE

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Threats to Home Medical Care Focus of NCAMES Winter Meeting Service providers turn out for workshops on economic and regulatory challenges

Raleigh, N.C.) Providing quality home care for patients in need was the core theme of the annual Winter Meeting of the North Carolina Association for Medical Equipment Services (NCAMES). The two day event held January 21-22 at the Grandover Resort and Conference Center in Greensboro attracted service providers from across the state for continuing education and training.

Difficult economic times, a rapidly increasing customer base, and flawed Federal regulations threatening businesses and patients were some of the challenges addressed by respected industry leaders at a number of sold-out workshops attracting well over 100 attendees.

“Thanks to all the high-quality health care institutions in our state helping more and more people and a steadily aging population, we’re seeing a real increase in the need for home medical equipment services,” NCAMES Executive Director Beth Bowen said. “At the same time, local companies providing those services are dealing with unprecedented Federal involvement in the application of health care services which is having an overwhelmingly negative impact on service providers and their patients,” she added.

According to Bowen, workshops dealing with new restrictive Federal contracting rules enacted in October 2009 provided the most lively Q&A sessions at the Winter Meeting, as participants struggled with their ability to qualify to service Medicare patients under the severely flawed regulations enacted by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in Washington, D.C. Industry estimates point to 90 percent of home medical equipment companies in North Carolina going out-of-business due to the competitive disadvantages of the new program.

Service providers attending the workshops learned details about pro-patient legislation, H.R. 3790, which has been proposed to fix the flaws in the regulations, while others packed presentations on how to create new and innovative ways to grow their businesses in North Carolina’s down economy.

During the keynote presentation, speaker Louis Feuer challenged attendees to reach into their pockets and pull out a dollar to give to the Haiti relief; NCAMES has donated the collected funds to the American Red Cross for its Haiti aid efforts.

A new NCAMES Board of Directors was elected at the meeting, including Gil McCall of The VGM Group; Chris Collins, LifeGas; Gary Gilberti, Chesapeake Rehab; Frank Trammell, Carolina's Home Medical Equipment; Kimberly Lynn, Carolina Apothecary; Pam Long, Chair & Equipment (Treasurer); Cynthia Jarman, Alliance Medical (Secretary); Ed Dressen, Dressen Medical (Vice President); and Marcia Ladd, Triangle Aftercare (President).

The next major NCAMES event is a Delivery Technician Certification Program to be held at the Hilton North Raleigh on March 20. For more information, visit NCAMES.org.

ABOUT NCAMES

With close to 300 member companies and growing, the North Carolina Association for Medical Equipment Services (NCAMES) is the statewide leader in preserving access to safe, affordable, and therapeutic home medical equipment. We provide advocacy and education to home medical equipment (HME) providers statewide dedicated to helping North Carolina’s growing senior population and patients of all ages gain more mobility and experience a high quality of life in the comfort and privacy of their own homes. NCAMES was instrumental in passing the nation’s first HME licensure law which has been working to ensure quality home health care since 1995, and fully supports pending legislation H.R. 3790 to continue HME access for patients in need. For more information, visit www.ncames.org or call (919)-387-1221.